











# INDIA AT THE CROSS ROADS

*A symposium of articles by :*

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**Shri Hem Barua, Member of Parliament.**

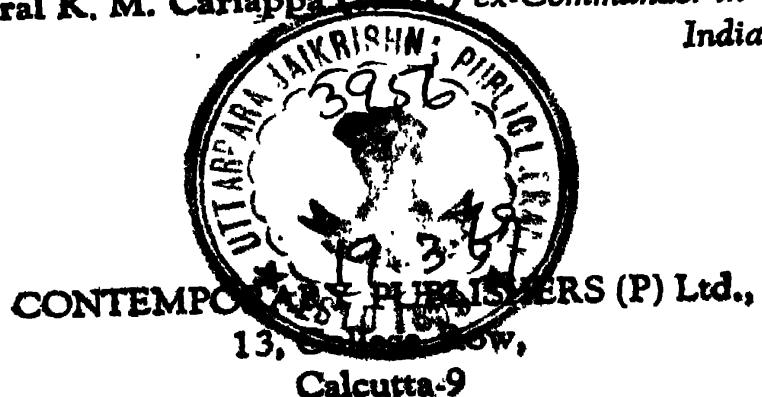
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*Dedicated to*  
**The People of India**



### **Publishers' Note**

Since aggression on our sacred land by the Chinese forces through the Himalayas and with continued reports in the press about our late Prime Minister's indifferent health, the question 'after Nehru what' became an item of discussion among intellectuals, politicians and the common man, not only in this country but abroad as well. There were a lot of kite-flyings and even astrological magazines are said to have increased their sales by dealing on this subject. Leaving such idle kite-flyings apart, it may be well said that the participation in the discussion by such a large number of people throughout the country showed their anxiety about the future of India with which their own futures were intimately linked up. In other words the Indian people gave expression to their political maturity by participating in the Great Debate—a debate which was sponsored by none but the developing National and international situation. Many hoped that Nehruji would help by nominating a successor, which would have been very easy for him in the given situation, and which would perhaps spare us, the Indians, habituated as we are to follow the scriptures and the Rishis from age-old times, from the troubles of hard-thinking and initiative. Others expected break-down of the administrative machinery after Nehruji's retirement or death and still others forecast establishment of a dictatorship either of the left or of the right. The gloomiest forecast was that the Chinese would launch upon further aggression on India and would perhaps succeed, taking advantage of the confusing situation that would surely follow Nehruji's relinquishment of Prime Ministership through death or retirement.

At that time we thought that it might be useful for public education, if a book containing different opinions by public leaders on the contemporary order of things were published and we considered that the appropriate title of such a publication could be "India At The Crossroads".

We wrote to many persons irrespective of their political views, and stated in our letters, *inter alia*, '.....The publication which will be some sort of a symposium will contain articles by eminent public men and leaders irrespective of their political or social views and the common subject will be the contemporary Indian situation in the background of international events and developments. The authors will be expected to discuss the problems of a developing economy under Five Year Plans, distribution of wealth, extension of democracy, programme of different political parties and groups, dangers of subversive forces and threats of foreign aggression...'

Though some responded but generally it was not upto our expectation, and in the mean time India lost one of her brilliant sons by the sudden death of our Late Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

It was an agonising time, but notwithstanding the oracles' pre-visions and forecasts, the country was very soon provided with a new Government under the Prime Ministership of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, with good wishes and blessings of all but a very few.

But even then, we thought, the question 'after Nehru what' remained, as we could not accept that the question meant simply, who would be the Prime Minister after Shri Nehru, but it had deeper significance concerning the shape of India's internal and external policies in the new situation which had been developing during the last 2 or 3 years of the late Prime Minister's administration. Hence we continued in our efforts to bring out the proposed publication although we could not publish it on the 14th Nov'64 last (Nehruji's birth day) as was originally planned.

The present book contains seven articles by eminent men like, Dr. Ramesh Ch Majumdar, a noted historian ; Shri Hem Barua, an eminent educationist of Assam and a member of the Parliament ; Shri M. R. Masani, Bar-at-Law and member of the Parliament ; Acharya J. B. Kripalani, ex-

President of the Indian National Congress and a member of the Parliament ; Sri, U. N. Dhebar, ex-President of the Indian National Congress and ex-Chief Minister of Saurashtra State ; Prof. Nirmal C. Bhattacharyya, M. L. C. (West Bengal) and Lecturer, Political Science, Calcutta University ; General K. M. Cariappa (Retd.) ex-Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army and ex-High Commissioner of India in Australia. The views expressed in the articles by different authors are entirely their own and do not in any way reflect the views or opinions of our organisation.

Although some of the articles are very critical of the present order of things or the Government under our late Prime Minister, such writings should be welcomed in a democratic country as free discussion and criticism represent the two pillars of democracy and they bring into clear relief its distinction from totalitarianism. It can never be maintained even by the highest in the society that his is the last word and he alone has spoken the truth and the correct, and the other point of view is all wrong. Only this much can be said that all the articles included in this book separately reflect the views of this or that group of the thinking section of the Indian public and all of them together plus other views not included in this book represent the Indian Democracy, which is emerging and taking a distinctive shape every day.

We should be happy if this publication of ours help the Indian people in participating more effectively in the Great Debate on the future of India, that has been going on during the last few years.

We thank all who co-operated in our present efforts and particularly Shri Hem Barua, member of the Parliament, who encouraged us with suggestions and advice from time to time.



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## INDEPENDENT INDIA—A Review

*Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M. A., Ph. D.*

Seventeen years have passed since India became free. The towering personality, who, during this long period, dominated India in the name and on behalf of the Indian National Congress, and strode over the whole sub-continent like a Colossus, has passed away, leaving a host of followers but no worthy captain to lead them safely out of the wilderness, in which they are stranded, to the promised land of milk and honey. The time is, therefore, opportune to look back and make a broad survey of the period, noting in bold outline the achievements as well as failures of the Government that was at the helm of affairs ; in other words, a review and retrospect of the stewardship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. This review would be purely objective, and it would be my endeavour, as far as possible, to make, without passion, prejudice or bias of any kind, a serious and earnest study of his administration, and prepare a sort of balance sheet of its achievements as well as failures. The conclusion would be based on hard facts and not personal fancies, on what has actually occurred rather than what might have happened, and finally, on solid deeds and not merely fine words. In short, it would be a realistic assessment and not an idealistic panegyric.

We may begin with a few remarkable features which immediately strike our notice. The first two are the uninterrupted sway of the Congress over the administration, and the unchallenged authority of Pandit Nehru over the Congress and, therefore, also over the entire administrative machinery, throughout the period under review. The causes and consequences of these, which will be discussed later, may be of controversial nature, but there is no doubt about these two facts.

Equally obvious are two great achievements of the Government for which they deserve credit, and two dismal failures which will be remembered to their eternal discredit.

The maintenance of the democratic form of Government during the period of transition would have been highly creditable in any case, but it becomes more so when we remember the fate of Pakistan and Burma, both parts of British India and therefore inspired by the same traditions and aspirations. Both started their independent career as Republic, but it was replaced by the military leadership, permanently in one case, and temporarily in the other. The maintenance of internal peace is another creditable achievement, and compares very favourably with the happenings in Burma, Laos, Vietnam, Malay, and Indonesia. National integration is yet to come, but the successful preservation of national unity may be reckoned as an important step in that direction.

The credit, often claimed by the Congress, that India alone has maintained democracy whereas it met with a miserable end in neighbouring States in Asia, is not likely to go unchallenged. It has been rightly urged that Free India has never enjoyed the blessings of a truly democratic Government, such, for example, as prevails in Britain or U. S. A. It may be true, as many have pointed out, that except in outward form and pure technique of administration, the difference between Pakistan under Ayub and India under Nehru was no more than that between tweedledum and tweedledee. But still it cannot be denied that even the maintenance of a form must be regarded as of great significance. For, it is much easier to restore true democracy so long as the framework remains intact and unsullied (as is the case in India but not in Pakistan) than to create a new democracy out of a total wreck. It would be difficult to deny that there is a greater and a more reasonable chance of the establishment of a true democracy in future in India than in Pakistan.

As against these two creditable achievements—preservation of internal peace and the democratic form of Government—we have to note two serious lapses on the part of the

Congress Government. The first is the irreparable loss caused by the collapse of the fine administrative fabric which the British had reared up at so much toil and left to us as one of the most precious legacies of their rule in India. It is a matter of surprise, indeed, how within ten years of the Congress rule the standard of efficiency and honesty of administration were lowered to such an extent that it has almost become the laughing stock of the people. No one contends that the British administration—even apart from its imperial background—was free from blemish and imperfections, but few outside the rank of the Congress would deny today that the present system of administration is hundred times worse. Bribery, nepotism, favouritism and other forms of corruption, on a huge—almost staggering—scale, wholesale incompetence at the top and utter lack of discipline at the bottom, with the inevitable consequence of injustice, discontent, delay, confusion, rudeness, and arrogance on the part of the officials, high and low, are generally believed to be rampant in every branch of administration. It has been the experience of many and the belief of all, that hardly anything can be done nowadys without offering bribe. This is not the view of merely common men, or of those who have spite against the Congress, but the recent statement of Sri Prakash is very revealing in this respect. Shri Prakash enjoyed high reputation as a public man even before he was appointed Governor of Maharashtra by the Congress Government. He was a very intimate friend of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and they met at Dehradun two or three days before the latter passed away on his return to New Delhi. Shri Prakash himself has written a short account of their interview and it was published in newspapers. He gave a very sad but realistic picture of the miserable life an Indian has to lead under the present administration. But he made the specific allegation that it was impossible to live today without offering bribe to one and sundry in course of the normal routine of daily life. He said this by way of explaining why he refused to be a member of the Sadachar Samiti of Shri Nanda (for stamping out corruption). He

pointed out that every member of the Samiti had to sign a declaration to the effect that he would neither take nor give bribes nor have anything to do with anyone taking bribes. He said he never accepted bribes in the past nor intended to do so in future, but he knew from the daily experience of his lonely life in a hill retreat that it would be impossible to live unless one was prepared to give bribe and he was not prepared to dismiss his servant who confessed that he had to give bribes for registering a document. Shri Prakash added that even he (an ex-Governor) might not secure a railway ticket without paying bribes. This very candid statement of Shri Prakash before Nehru certainly confirms the popular opinion about the universal corruption prevailing under the Congress Government. Allegations are made almost every day from many quarters of corruption of ministers and high officials. Far from acting on the very healthy principle that Caesar's wife must be above suspicion, and probing into the serious allegations, the Government assumes an attitude as if it is the duty and business of the citizens to adduce convincing proof of the alleged guilt, a thing which is almost impossible for a private person. But after repeated agitation and a systematic exposure of very many ugly incidents, made possible by the praiseworthy and sacrificing spirit of a number of citizens, the Government was almost forced to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to consider the allegations against the Chief Minister of the Punjab. The findings of the Commission have been a slap on the face of the Government for withholding the inquiry for such a long time, and include amazing revelations about the unscrupulous ways in which even a Chief Minister can behave. Similar persistent allegations have been made against other Ministers, but the Government had enough of it, and, according to the newspaper reports, the High Command of the Congress have decided not to appoint similar Commission in future. This certainly confirms the public view that the corruption even in high quarters is so widely spread, and is of such a heinous character, that the Government dares not probe into the allegations. Every

dignified and self-respecting Government should have appointed an impartial public commission or committee of inquiry into the public allegations of corruption, but far from doing that the Congress Government has disowneed even the innocuous Sadachar Samiti which the Home Member, Shri G. L. Nanda, thought fit to set up some time ago, probably as a visible symbol of his oft-repeated promise to stamp out the corruption in Government, in course of one or two years (I do not remember exactly the period, for it is useless to attach any value to such ministerial pronouncements). We are told that the Sadachar Samiti was not sanctioned by the Cabinet. Well, then the obvious course would have been to give such a sanction or to set up a similar body if there were any serious desire on the part of the Government to stamp out corruption. Is not the public entitled to attribute the prevalence of corruption to this mentality on the part of the Government, and to look upon it as an indirect connivance, if not positive encouragement, of the corruption ? This view may be wrong, but certainly not unnatural, and such a feeling on the part of a very large section of the public is a great handicap to the proper functioning of any Government. It is a trite observation that the successful working of every Government depends upon the goodwill of the people and the prestige it enjoys among them. Now, it would be hardly any exaggeration to say that the present Congress Government does not command the least prestige outside its own circle and that of its own beneficiaries. But even this limitation is not wholly true, for many officials are the most vehement in denouncing the Government in private, and the outward devotion of the non-official supporters of the Congress mostly evaporates with the loss of the loaves and fishes they used to get from it.

But the Government is not only proecting the corrupt, it is also highly inefficient. This is testified to by almost every one who has any dealings with the Government offices. I have had talks with people belonging to various ranks and classes, and I have hardly met with any one, including high Government

officials themselves who knew the older days, who does not feel that the standard of efficiency has grievously suffered. The number of officials of all ranks is steadily increasing, but the larger the number the less the efficiency. Later, we shall have to discuss the question in greater detail. It will suffice to state here that the main causes of the breakdown of the entire system of administration are the ignorance, incompetence and lack of administrative experience of the ministers and the unofficial bosses of the Government, their superiority-complex which cause them to assert themselves and interfere even in matters of which they have little knowledge and less understanding, every official's belief, by no means unfounded, that the way to promotion and betterment lies not through efficient and good work but through the favour of anybody who has influence with the Congress authorities, the sure knowledge that to incur the displeasure of any one, who has pull with a high-up in the Congress hierarchy is to invite ruin and the easiest way to save himself from even well-founded charge of any offence of omission or commission in the discharge of his official duties is to secure the protection of such a person. Every official is therefore always more anxious to procure, by any means fair or foul, the patronage of a Congress highup than to satisfy his superior official by good and honest hard work. As every locality has a number of persons with potential voting powers at the time of the General Election, no Congress boss is willing to refuse their request, and it is a matter of common knowledge that even a District Magistrate has to placate the whims and wishes of the Chairman and influential members of the District Congress Committees. This domination of arrogant men with little knowledge and experience at the top and of unofficial bosses at the bottom has completely destroyed official discipline and cut at the very root of the sense of duty and responsibility without which no efficiency is possible. Here, again, the analysis of the causes of the evil may be challenged, but of the evil itself there cannot be any manner of doubt. To guard against misunderstanding it should be made clear that we do not mean to

imply that patronage and favouritism were unknown in the past. But it has increased immensely and is now an organic part of the whole system of administration whose main end in view is not so much the welfare of the country as the preservation of the power of the Party that rules the country and seeks to rule it for ever.

There are Congressmen who consciously or unconsciously support the corrupt régime on the ground that with all its faults the Congress administration is necessary for the good of the country, and any other would be much worse. What good the country under Congress rule has enjoyed in the past or is enjoying at the present moment is only too well-known, and will be discussed later. As to the other argument, an average man, not initiated into the mystery of party politics, finds little comfort in it, for his simple mind would suggest that a servant of proved dishonesty or inefficiency must be condemned and got rid of and not pampered under the fear that the next servant may be worse still.

We may next proceed to discuss the second great blot on the Congress régime. If it has succeeded in ruining the framework of the administration it inherited from the British, it has equally succeeded in extinguishing the high enthusiasm and idealism which the freedom movement and its unique success had generated in the minds of all classes of Indians—rich and poor, learned and ignorant, old and young, and men and women. Many people would still recollect the scenes witnessed on 15 August, 1947, all over India—scenes of unprecedented enthusiasm expressive of the high emotions and idealism generated by the prospect of a glorious future for our mother-land. But all this has vanished and a spirit of frustration has taken its place. This could be easily verified on the last Independence Day when no signs of even formal greetings of independence on the part of the people of different shades of opinion (except, of course, the official Congress which has been the chief beneficiary) were visible in this vast city. One looked around from the roof of a high building only to see a few isolated flags flying here and there, the fewness of

whose number only served to emphasize the lack of enthusiasm on the great occasion. It is not very unusual—as it should be—even to hear people pining for the days under British rule. This frustration has chilled the spirit of service to the country which freedom had generated. Younger generations do not feel the warmth of higher idealism which independence should have created in their minds. The old ideals of fighting for the liberation of the country have gone and no new ideals have taken their place, creating a mental and moral vacuum. There is a complete lack of faith in morality, convention or tradition of the old. The worst consequence of this moral and intellectual degeneration that holds the men in its grip is that they have lost the courage to uphold truth and justice, and to put up brave fights against the wrongs recognized by all. A complete lack of discipline prevails in every class. There are strikes of students and teachers ; hartals and long processions are the order of the day ; almost everywhere we hear of 'isms' and consequent splits among both students and labourers ; and educational institutions are having experiences which they never had before. These are not accidental, but largely the products of the spirit of frustration caused by the failure of the Congress to deliver the goods expected from them. It is true there are other causes at work, but a healthy growth of youth on the basis of some high ideals would have canalised their eagerness, vigour and enthusiasm into a proper channel. Devotion to the service of the country, a noble ideal which should have been of incalculable value at the period of transition through which we are passing, is almost conspicuous by its absence and this is mainly due to the frustration of spirit caused by all-round corruption, dishonesty, intellectual demoralisation and moral degradation in the upper layer which the young men see around them. Those who are condemned to breathe the putrid atmosphere from their very birth cannot be expected to develop a healthy life. A young man's sense of morality is stunted by the examples of men who are hailed as great and occupy high position in life, notwithstanding their well-known lapses in both public and private lives. Instances

can be multiplied to almost any extent. Well-known examples of this kind, by no means few in number, form subjects of common talk in every circle, and its influence upon the young men can be easily imagined.

We may now pass on to the belief, honestly held by many, that in spite of the undoubted evils the Congress Government alone can lead the country to its goal. A belief is of little value unless backed by some reasonable grounds. In the present instance the validity of this belief can be easily tested by a proper assessment of the works already done by the Congress Government during the last seventeen years. A tree is judged by its fruit, and so the best means of assessing the achievement of the Congress rule is to take stock of the present situation in the country after seventeen years of independence and self-rule. For this purpose it is only necessary to look around, or perhaps not even that, for at least 99 per cent. of Indians know it to their cost from their own experience. It will suffice to run over the main items. The cost of essential foodstuffs and other consumers' goods have reached the highest scale ever known in this country, not excluding even the period of emergency during the wars, and nobody can fail to see the tendency of the price to rise higher and higher still. To this has recently been added the scarcity of all essential foodstuffs, such as rice, fish and mustard oil in Bengal. No less serious is the almost universal adulteration which is seriously impairing the health of all. To combat this evil the Government adopted the system of ration and control. While the supply through ration and fair price shops is quite insufficient, they have introduced another serious evil. Anyone moving through Calcutta will be struck by the scenes of long queues in front of these shops, and sometimes men, women and even children have to wait for hours together from early dawn before they get the insufficient dole (at an exorbitant price) or are told to come the next day as the supply was already exhausted. Similar queues are formed before the office issuing ration cards, but according to reliable information the relief from the trouble of waiting hour after hour can

be purchased at a comparatively cheap price, about one rupee per head for supplying each form of application, and a varying amount for the card itself. One can easily imagine the lot of the poor working classes who have either to abstain from work, at heavy loss, in order to attend these queues, or to make purchases from black market at high price.

The Government is always ready with plans to check these evils, and the public is always assured that things will improve from next week. But alas! weeks pass but the position deteriorates instead of improving. This is mainly due to corruption which flourishes most in a situation like this. For every order of control or restriction or supervision serves as a good opportunity for the official staff engaged to enrich themselves by allowing the offenders to carry on their trade by means of gratification paid in cash. The amount they pay is, of course, realized by enhancing the price of the commodity. Thus the increase in control and supervision goes on with increase in black-market price at a competitive rate. So the people are getting nervous at the prospect of State trading in foodstuffs, which they apprehend will make their lot harder by bringing about a chaos.

For all the evils which even the Government is forced to admit, it lays the blame on every shoulder except its own. During the present food crisis, the hoarder is held up as the villain of the piece. The Government fumes and frets and is always ready to hurl thunder upon him, but he is not hanged by the nearest lamp-post as our late Prime Minister recommended, of course in his unregenerate days before he had assumed the burden of Prime Ministership. The big hoarders know that they can easily escape from the net, for it is thrown round them only by way of appeasing the public and making a show of determined activity. They possess golden scissors which can cut the hardest net—a judicious distribution of money among the political bosses, promise of help at the time of the next General Election, or threat to withdraw this help and the customary grant made on such occasions in the past, often prove quite sufficient for the purpose. But while all this

outward demonstration is made against the hoarders, and the public is bamboozled by plans and proclamations of all kinds notifying the heroic resolve of the Government to make sufficient foodstuff available at no distant date, the vital question on which alone depends the solution of the problem is allowed to go by default. It is a well-known fact that the population in India shows a steady increase at every census. Any Government with ordinary foresight should have given top priority to the problem of increasing the production of food in the country. But no serious effort is known to have been made in this direction. Some ministers long ago probably thought of it, for I know that a few agricultural chemists were sent abroad for training, and if I remember aright, a list was made of arable lands lying fallow in different parts of India which might be made to yield rich crops by scientific treatment. But by the time the scholars returned after their training was over, the whole scheme probably found its last refuge behind the red tape. For, nothing was done—so far at least as the increase of food for the public was concerned. But the Government was not ungrateful or inconsiderate. One of the scholars so trained was appointed a member of the Public Service Commission, first in a State and then in the Central Government. Such was the result of one spasmodic effort that I know of. There might have been others of this kind—such as the deep-sea fishing which cost probably more than a crore for buying trawlers which now remain, if they remain at all, a deadweight upon the public and a monument of folly, one among many of the same type, of the very successful administration of an eminent Chief Minister.

While the cost of living is rising at an alarming rate, the number of the educated unemployed is steadily increasing. One unexpected remedy, though only partial, is in sight, for which thanks are undoubtedly due to the Government! The doors of the educational institutions, at least in West Bengal, are now closed to quite a large number of candidates for admission for want of space. This will automatically reduce the number of the educated in future, and therefore also of the

educated unemployed. The steadily increasing number of students who have passed the secondary stage but find it impossible to go in for higher education, either ordinary, technical, professional or vocational, constitutes a problem, the gravity of which will go on increasing year after year. The number of such students is, however, to a large extent, limited by the fact that the benefit of primary education is limited to a small number, at least in some States. The Congress was the loudest in proclaiming free and compulsory primary education for all. The famous Wardha Scheme of Mahatma Gandhi by which the Congress ministries (of British period) swore was a veritable wonder. It would not involve any cost either to the pupil or to the Government, for the manual and productive work turned out by the pupils would suffice for all expenditure of schools, including the salary of teachers, and the training imparted to these pupils during the seven years they would remain at school would be such that after leaving it they would be able to earn their living by their manual skill. But the Congress Government in Free India, though reminding us on every second day of October, year after year, of following the ideals of Gandhiji, seems to have given a complete go-bye to the scheme propounded by him and approved by the All-India Educational Conference held at Wardha in October, 1937, under the Presidentship of Gandhiji himself. But if the Congress Government failed to introduce free and compulsory primary education, as recommended by Gandhiji, for want of funds, they spent an enormous amount in violation of another educational principle enunciated by him. Gandhiji laid down that "higher education should be left to private enterprise and the State Universities should be purely examining bodies." But the Congress seems to have been bent upon increasing the number of teaching universities at a break-neck speed, and today their number is more than fifty, though there were only eighteen during the last year of British rule. But though the number of universities is steadily increasing, there does not seem to have been any well-thought-out plan behind it.

The attitude of the Government seems to be that mere multiplication of universities would solve the problem of higher education. For more than half a century the system of education introduced by the British has been strongly condemned, and there has been a persistent demand for national education in place of one which was devised for only producing clerks. No definite idea has, however, yet emerged as to the concrete shape of this national education. One of the means, perhaps adopted to solve this problem, was to appoint Congress politicians instead of educationists as heads of universities. As a matter of fact, the Vice-Chancellorship was formerly monopolised almost by lawyers, and now politicians have been added to it. Eminent educationists who have devoted their lives to education are not usually thought of in this connection, and the appointment of such persons as Vice-Chancellors is few and far between.

Another connected problem which still awaits solution and which seems to have acquired political importance at the present moment, is the medium of teaching in universities. The Government has shown a vacillation on this point which has satisfied none and irritated everyone. The claims of English, Hindi and the regional languages have been argued *ad nauseam*, but no solution is within sight yet. The Government is extending the life of English in a very hesitating and niggardly spirit, and by slow stages. The whole difficulty seems to be that the question is mainly approached from a political rather than strictly academic point of view. The overzealous patrons of Hindi have introduced an element of discord which may appear in the political sky of India to be a cloud no bigger than a man's hand at present, but may soon overcast the sky and cause storm and thunder. Like most other problems, the Government had never the courage to deal with it firmly and have gone on temporising.

The Government emphasizes, rightly enough, the need of technical education, and has set up new institutions for this purpose. But there seems to be no relation between the number of students trained and the existing facilities for the

utilization of their service. A number of highly trained students are serving abroad, and they are willing to come back at a much reduced pay, and place their talents and skill at the service of their motherland, but no opportunities are offered to them, and quite a number of graduates who have come out of the Technical Institutes recently started, do not find suitable appointment. This is a problem to which sufficient attention has not been paid.

All these and many other important questions have a great bearing on the problem of educated unemployment. And this problem must be regarded as a vital one in the life of a nation. In every age and every country it is the educated middle class which has held aloft and carried on the torch of culture and civilization. But the policy pursued by the Congress Government may well end in a liquidation of that class. In addition to the high price of food, housing, and clothing which hit this class more severely than the labouring population, there is the question of high taxation. The rate of taxation has gone on increasing at an alarming rate, and the higher middle class is being bled absolutely white. This process would gradually squeeze a large section of the lower middle class, who depend upon and sustain the steady supply of the former, out of all decent livelihood even of a minimum standard, and the dividing line between an educated gentleman of the lower middle class and a factory labourer would be gradually thinner and thinner. Ill-housed, ill-fed and ill-dressed to a degree which is almost incredible, a large percentage of this class has lost all sense of self-respect, and is gradually merging into the proletariat, thereby thinning gradually the ranks of the middle class who form the backbone of the society. This may be an ideal solution in the eyes of certain sections of the people, but old-fashioned people still think that the ideal should be not to drag down but to pull up. It ought to be our endeavour to raise the standard of the proletariat in respect of food, clothing, housing and education, and not to bring down the whole population to the same degraded level. And yet that would be the inevitable consequence if the

process that has already started is allowed to continue further.

But the middle class educated suffer from other disabilities. As a result of industrialization, culture has lost its value to a large extent and it can be saved only by putting emphasis on its importance. But this is becoming more and more difficult for several reasons. In the first place, the acquisition of wealth has become the chief object of life and naturally the best talents are veering round to business and technical education, as there is no prospect of earning a decent livelihood, not to speak of hoarding wealth, by any other means. The ill-gotten wealth of the uneducated demoralizes intellect and education, for they have the power to force the educated people to sell their talents for a money value. In other words, the wealthy parade as wise and learned by successfully exploiting the talented to subserve their own interests. It is a well-known fact that many men who have acquired wealth pass on as learned and wise by using the talents of others which he buys with money. This has the effect of degrading the whole intellectual class.

The tax that falls most heavily on the higher middle class is the income-tax. Curiously enough, while those who find it most difficult to pay are mercilessly fleeced to the last pice, the rich businessmen, who ought to be the chief target as they form the most plentiful source, are in a position to evade at least a large part of the tax that is legitimately due. More than two hundred crores of rupees out of the tax assessed upon them even under this handicap remain unpaid, and it is the saddest commentary on the Congress administration that even in the present emergency it has not been possible to realize, after years of effort (?), even a tithe of the huge arrears due. It is almost the universal belief that the best method of tax-dodging has been to offer direct or indirect bribe to the bosses such as fat contribution to the party or election fund. Some years ago, it was alleged, a wealthy man threatened with prosecution for evasion of tax, successfully appealed to the bosses for the great 'betrayal', for did he not pay

a heavy sum to the party fund on the distinct understanding that it would save him from the payment of the tax? So far as I remember, the case was withdrawn and the offending minister or high official who threatened the prosecution had to go. Whether this story be true or false, people look upon some such method as the most reasonable explanation of the successful evasion of a huge amount of tax for such a long period for which no explanation worth the name has ever been forthcoming. There are also stories current of some honest Income-tax officers, who had the hardihood to assess legal taxes from Congress favourites (including those who could buy or otherwise procure such favour), being transferred at very short notice, so that the case may be revised by his successor, who must have been a sadder but a wiser man by the fate of his predecessor. But whatever we may think of the causes, the plain fact remains that many big businessmen have successfully evaded the payment of income-taxes due from them, amounting to many crores of rupees. Colin Clarke, who has made a special study of India's economic resources, has observed that if only the revenue due to the Government by tax-dodgers were collected it would be easy for India to balance the budget without serious difficulty within a short period.

But honest income-tax officers, mentioned above, do not stand alone. Similar fate is known to have overtaken other honest officers who had the courage to detect the dishonesty or crime of subordinate officers, contractors, etc. As a matter of fact it is almost a common knowledge that honesty is not only not appreciated but is sometimes penalised in the interest of the party bosses. It is this which has thoroughly undermined both honesty and efficiency among the Government officials. As has been proved in some recent cases, corruption among the top ranks, including ministers, takes various forms. In addition to direct acceptance of money or its equivalents, these high officials allow their sons and relatives to take bribes or to use (abuse?) their name and position to procure money by such illegal means, as promise

to secure favour, appointment or business contract or to carry on business on the basis of such abuse. In short, corruption in the forms of patronage, nepotism, favouritism, taking direct bribes and therefore shutting eyes to the acceptance of bribes by the subordinates (who are known to have been inspired by the examples of their superiors and cited their examples by way of justification) is known to have prevailed in all ranks from ministers downward to the Chaprasis and constables. A funny instance was reported in the newspapers some time ago. A minister of West Bengal while passing in his car found a police constable taking bribe of 25 naye paisa from a carter. The minister immediately got down and penalised the offending constable by asking him to pull his own ears while standing and sitting down again in quick succession a specified number of times. Perhaps this was a praiseworthy act, but one would like to ask (undoubtedly the constable asked himself) whether the same minister would recommend equally prompt and direct punishment to ministers who may be found to be guilty of taking bribe amounting to more than million times of what the poor constable took. It is considerations like these that blunt the edge of these well-meaning acts for preventing bribery and corruption. Ministers who have promised to stamp out corruption within a year (or some such short period) would do well to remember not only the well-known homely saying : "Physician, heal thyself !" but also the admonition of Jesus Christ to those who were about to stone the courtesan, Mary Magdalene : "He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her." I have an idea that if Jesus Christ today repeated the same admonition to our ministers, most of the hands would be turned down as was the case with the motley crowd whom Jesus had actually addressed.

This corruption lies at the root of the failure of almost all the plans of the Government for relieving the misery and improving the economic condition of the masses. For, however well-conceived the plan might be, its execution by corrupt hands cannot lead to success. Space would not

permit details, but a little inquiry will show that all the plans of control, permit, licence, etc., apart from their inherent defects, failed because they were never given a fair trial in the hands of corrupt officers who were entrusted with their execution ; they merely served to furnish more opportunities for widening the circle of corruption. This point should be seriously considered by the Government before they launch the State Trading Corporations or any such scheme, for until the corruption is removed, at least substantially, every such plan is bound to miscarry and merely add to the misery of the people and wasteful expenditure of public money. There is a Bengali saying that ghosts cannot be driven away, if they can seize the mustard seeds which are used as antidotes against them. If the machinery itself is rotten, it cannot be expected to deliver the goods. It is not difficult to understand why, in spite of repeated failures, the Government is ever eager to multiply the controls, permits, licences, and other forms of State interferences. Because it extends the sphere of patronage and gives them more effective control over a larger number of voters, and the support of the officials is influenced by the opportunities of more bribery and employment of new hands who would of course include a fair number of their own relatives and dependents. As a matter of fact this process has gone on steadily and is responsible for increasing the number of salaried employees under Government to an almost incredible extent. This would be evident from a comparison of the staff in 1947 with that of 1964. The excuse offered, namely the extension of the activities of the Government, would hardly stand a scrutiny, for far from the increase being proportionate to the additional activities, it is the opinion not only of the common people, but of responsible officials, that the increase of numbers has been a hindrance rather than help, and decreased the all-round efficiency of work. Those who are familiar with the office-work in old days can easily verify it by visiting a modern office where the clerks take things more easily, without any fear of disciplinary action. Every official, down to Class IV, can count upon two fruitful sources

of protection against any such danger. He is a member of a Union which can create troubles. Government does not like to incur its wrath in many cases for fear of losing block votes at the election. The second line of protection is the patronage of a congress boss, for it ought not to be a difficult task to secure one from among the hundreds which abound in the country. The same two causes, particularly the last one, serve as a powerful deterrent to every well-meaning officer who is not prepared to risk his career for the sake of doing his duty. These and perhaps other causes, too, are at work, but opinion is almost unanimous that lack of discipline and efficiency, to an incredible extent, is rampant in all Government offices.

But the unnecessary increase in the number of officials, leading to the defects mentioned above, is not confined to the lower ranks. A very convincing evidence has been fortunately furnished by the Congress itself. Some time ago a non-official member of the Legislature in West Bengal suggested reduction in the number of ministers. The Chief Minister opposed it on the ground that efficiency in work would suffer thereby. But some time later under the Kamraj Plan the Ministry was reduced to half the size, and the Chief Minister, by way of supporting the Kamraj Plan, declared that the efficiency had not suffered in any way. I believe he was almost right, for there has been no indication during the long period that has elapsed since, that the efficiency, so far as it existed at all, had declined in any way. The Chief Minister erred the other way, for he might well have added that the efficiency has increased. Now this incident has one great merit of indicating the mentality of the Congress. The curtailment of expenditure by reducing the number of ministers was refused even during a period which was declared as emergency by the Government itself, yet greater curtailment was done overnight for what was supposed to contribute to the efficiency of the Congress. In other words, the Congress was not ready to sacrifice for the interest of the country what it readily did sacrifice for the interest of the Party. This has been the keynote of the policy pursued by the Congress Government—to place

the interest of the Party above that of the country, and to further the former at any cost, and by any means. This readily explains the corrupt and dubious ways in which the administration has been carried in respect of many of its activities.

Much has been made of the three Plannings. Not being an economist, I cannot enter into details. Obviously some heavy industrial plants already set up would be of immense benefit to the country. But the question is, at what cost? The Sterling Reserves of the country are nearly exhausted and by our heavy borrowings we have mortgaged our future. But minor industries, particularly the all-important agricultural improvement has been neglected. Above all, the hopes confidently expressed by the authorities have not been fulfilled. The national wealth has hardly increased in terms of price, and it is generally agreed that the net result of the planning has been the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands, so that the rich have become richer and the poor have become poorer. This inequitable distribution of wealth constitutes a grave problem for the future welfare of the country. For, this, as well as the want of everything except the want itself, has been the breeding ground of Communism in other regions of the world. It is not often realized how India, where these two features are combined today, shows a close resemblance to China under the Kuomintang Chief, Chiang Kai-shek. Let me quote two sentences from a small treatise on the subject: "After nearly twenty years in power the Kuomintang had become corrupt and arbitrary to a degree without precedent even in Chinese history. It was not the Kuomintang's fault that the Chinese people were poverty-stricken, but the Government had done nothing to check a galloping inflation and seemed content to let the rich get richer while the poor got poorer." With the substitution of 'seventeen' for 'twenty' and the 'Congress' for 'Kuomintang' the above passage might easily be taken as an exact description of India today. Yet these lines were written to explain why the Kuomintang went down and Communism got the upper hand in China in 1949.

To complete the picture, it is necessary to emphasize that though the Congress Government has destroyed the fine fabric of administration left by the British, it has obstinately clung to some of its worst features dictated by the necessity of a foreign power to hold the subject country in check. In the first place, the Congress Government shows the same anxiety to rule by the Executive fiat than by law, or, to put it more correctly, to remove the restraint on authority imposed by law by removing the law itself. The amendments of the Constitution, no less than seventeen in number during seventeen years, and the circumstances leading thereto, give uncerring evidence on this point. Secondly, the abuse of the Defence of India Act passed as an emergency during War. The Congress was the loudest in declamation against it during the last World War, but is guilty of repeating the same even today in the name of the emergency of the Chinese War. No other sign of emergency is visible to an ordinary man except restraints put upon his freedom in various ways. Even books are proscribed under the act though they do not contain the least reference to China or the War. And this is done by the Executive authorities under the Defence of India Act, so that objections, if any, against any book may not be adjudged by a legally constituted Court. Thirdly, the suppression from the public of very important but highly inconvenient facts. The suppression of all news about Chinese aggression on our northern frontier, for years, is an instance. Fourthly, implicit faith in official reports and repugnance to public inquiries. The history of India under the Congress Government abounds in such cases. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru demanded a public inquiry and the heads of Dyer, O'Dwyer and Chelmsford on a charger after the Punjab massacre, but assumed a different attitude in similar cases and refused to hold an inquiry, more or less in exactly the same way as the British did in 1919. There is a glaring instance of the same mentality in more recent times. A student of a Calcutta College, Bhudev Sen by name, was alleged to be shot at the gate of the college while a body of students were

taking out a procession. It was a very tragic incident which called for an immediate sifting inquiry. The parents of the boy, the public, and the student-body of Bengal as a whole moved heaven and earth to get the Government to hold an inquiry. But the Government remained adamant, and even though there have been *hartals*, processions of students in protest, etc. no inquiry was held. Fifthly, we find the same control over newspapers to avoid unpleasant truths leaking out. This control is managed by different, but perhaps no less dubious ways, such as costly advertisements which may be given or withheld at pleasure by the Government to newspapers. But whatever may have been the means employed by the Government, the people feel that the Press has failed to perform the duty of honest but fearless criticism which is one of the strongest pillars of Democracy. I asked the founder-proprietor of an important daily why his paper did not notice a particularly offensive act on the part of the Congress Government. He plainly admitted that it was part of his policy and so also that of his paper not to place the faults of the Government before the public, as that may be very damaging to the Congress. As a matter of fact, it is a well-known fact that the best known papers of the country are very shy of any hostile criticism of Gandhi or Nehru. When Pandit Nehru spoke at Jubbulpore that the communal riot there was the first serious blow to the national integration, I wrote a letter to a local Daily inquiring whether it was a greater blow than some events that happened some time ago. Needless to say, it was not published. I have other experiences of the kind. Many people therefore think, not without reason, that the Congress has learnt well from the British the art of exercising strict control over the press. There are some who even hold that the Press is more subservient to the Government today than it was to the British authorities.

But steps are already afoot to make the Government-control over the Press still more rigorous. The Press Council Bill, introduced in the Rajya Sabha proposes to vest the Press Council with powers of a court of law, with no provision for

the right of appeal against its decision. M. D. Mani, a member of the Press Commission which recommended a Statutory Press Council, opposed the Bill and pointed out that the similar Press Council in Britain did not function as a court of law, and the Press could complain against public authorities. "As against this", continued Mani, "in India advertisements have been withdrawn from newspapers which have been critical of the Government policy". He also wanted that editors of newspapers should have the right to complain to the Council against politicians and business interests which tried to suppress freedom of opinion. It remains to be seen whether the Government would pay any heed to these very pertinent criticisms and constructive suggestions. The Bill, as finally passed, would be a crucial test of the Government's attitude towards the freedom of the Press which is recognized all over the world as a necessary adjunct to true Democracy and indispensable for its true functioning.

The Congress, on behalf of India, strongly denounced the lavish expenditure of the British in holding Durbars. But now it is more lavish in its expenditure on the sessions of the Congress and AICC, and even, if a newspaper report is to be believed, in a recent celebration of the birth anniversary of the Congress President. The money nominally comes as donations from the obliging friends and patrons, but it is the country that ultimately has to pay for it; for no one parts with a thousand or a lakh of rupees unless he has a fair expectation of ten times in return by not very straight means or methods connived at, if not helped, by the authorities themselves. It is presumed by many that this very clear mutual understanding alone enables the Congress bosses to raise funds both for the party as well as for themselves. But it does not require much ingenuity to find out that it really comes from the pocket of the individual citizen though he may not appear in the picture at all until he is forced to buy the essential food stuff from the black market at an exorbitant price, which is merely a *return with profit*, of the so-called donations made by the hoarder or black-marketeer.

There are also other analogies between the British and the Congress Raj. Every member of the Congress regards himself, *vis a vis* the Government, in the same light as did the individual Englishman in India during the British rule, and claims the same special considerations and privileges, and sometimes even the same right to be arrogant to those who are outside the Congress-fold. The resulting evil is, however, much greater now, as the members of the Congress are larger in number, spread over every nook and corner, and their special interests touch almost every branch of administration. In short, the Congress is as much an *imperium in imperio* as was the Anglo-Indian Community during the British rule.

Further, as all honours, appreciations, rewards, nominations, and similar other prerogatives of the British rulers were, generally speaking, bestowed only on those whose loyalty to the British Government was fully assured, or at least never questioned or in doubt, so is the case with the Congress Raj. Thus sympathy for the Congress was as much a disqualification under British regime, as the lack of it is in the eyes of the present Government.

Finally, the Congress Government has taken a leaf out of the British book of lawless laws. Ordinances prohibiting meetings and processions, dispersing crowds and processionists by 'mild' lathi charges, *as of old*, restraining freedom of individuals in a manner which suits more an autocratic Government than one which calls itself democratic, and even firing on unarmed crowds, are of frequent occurrence. As noted above, the official attitude towards allegations against police of committing excesses has not changed a bit, there being the same confidence in the honesty and truthfulness of the police and the infallibility of Departmental inquiry, and the same aversion to judicial or independent public inquiry. Worst of all is, of course, the most undemocratic procedure of putting citizens behind prison bars, without any proper trial, for an indefinite period. This is the negation of a fundamental democratic right possessed by every free citizen of India. 'I am no friend of the Communists who have

suffered mostly from this procedure. In every age and every country, open or tacit support to an invader of the mother-land by words or actions, is regarded as a high treason, and high treason deserves exemplary punishment of a severe nature. But then it should be left to the Court to adjudicate upon each case, and not taken up by the Executive. Special pleadings have been made in support of it, more or less on the same line as the British did. Any admitted defect in law might have been remedied easily and quickly when the emergency of Chinese aggression arose, and the Communists might have been openly tried in courts of law. It is difficult to believe that a Court or jurors would not convict a Communist if the charges against them could be reasonably proved. If the Government did not possess such materials then either the Government Police were at fault or the accused must be held as not guilty. I would rather allow some Communists to go unpunished in this way, than create a most dangerous precedent by imprisoning a citizen on mere suspicion,—an executive procedure which is sure to recoil on the whole body politic. Further, it should be remembered that Communism cannot be killed in this way. Autocracy and corruption at the top and distress and misery at the bottom have done more for the growth of Communism in India than the arrested leaders alleged to be backed by money from foreign countries.

So far we have described in some detail the great evils that India has been suffering from. We may now proceed to find out, if possible, the root causes which are responsible for this state of things.

According to the Bible the taste of the forbidden fruit brought all the woes in the world. To me it appears that the taste of political power by the Indian National Congress has brought all our woes in India. This is so unorthodox a view that it requires some elucidation.

The Congress was brought into being for the improvement of our political condition. At first it was a merely deliberative body, asking for political reforms. Gradually it was changed

into a revolutionary movement aspiring at freedom, and achieved it in 1947—after more than sixty years. During this long period it has always been the vanguard of political movement and, in the last stages, represented the nation in its struggle for freedom. With the exception of a few dissident sections, it was, in the eyes of the Hindus, the army of liberation which was engaged in a life and death struggle, backed by the goodwill of the entire population. Thus when at last the victory came, the Congress enjoyed the prestige of an army fresh from victory against enormous odds. Its work was done and it should have dissolved itself as such, i.e a fighting organisation, as for example, the British and French armies had done after the two great world-wars. Unfortunately, this view did not prevail in the long run, though it was very clearly visualised by the two great leaders by whose names the Congress swears even today. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had categorically declared that the "Congress as such would automatically cease to exist after independence." Mahatma Gandhi's views may be stated at some length, as he very correctly foretold the consequences which would follow if the Congress fought for election as a political party for gaining power

On 27 January, 1948, Gandhiji wrote : "The Congress has got the preliminary and necessary part of her freedom. The hardest has yet to come. In its difficult ascent to democracy, it has inevitably created rotten boroughs leading to corruption and creation of institutions, popular and democratic only in name. How to get out of the weedy unwieldy growth ?

"The Congress must do away with its special register of members ... Its register should now be co-extensive with all the men and women on the voters' rolls in the country. The Congress business should be to see that no faked name gets in and no legitimate name is left out. On its own register it will have a body of servants of the nation who would be workers doing the work allotted to them from time to time....

"These servants will be expected to operate upon and serve

the voters registered according to law, in their own surroundings. Many persons and parties will woo them. The very best will win. Thus and in no other way can the Congress retain its fast-ebbing unique position in the country."

Two days later Gandhiji again elucidated his views : "Though split into two, India having attained political independence through means devised by the Indian National Congress, the Congress in its present shape and form, i.e., as propaganda vehicle and parliamentary machine has out-lived its use. It has still to attain social, moral and economic independence in terms of its seven hundred thousand villages as distinguished from its cities and towns. The struggle for the ascendancy of civil over military power is bound to take place in India's progress towards its democratic goal. It must be kept out of unhealthy competition with political parties and communal bodies. For these and other similar reasons the AICC resolve to disband the existing Congress organization and flower into a Lok Sevak Sangh under the following rules with power to alter them as occasion may demand."

This is the preamble of what has justly been regarded as the "Last Will and Testament" of Mahatma Gandhi. We are not concerned here with the detailed rules that follow this preamble.

The Congress deliberately violated the wish so clearly expressed by two persons whom the Congress has never ceased to proclaim as their great and infallible leaders. The most curious aspect of the whole thing is that even now, on the second of October, every year, the Congress Ministers, from hundreds of platforms all over India, solemnly ask the people to follow the ideals of Gandhi. One might well exclaim that the best example of their following the ideal of Gandhi would be to step down from the *Gaddi* they have been occupying for good many years by violating the ideal which Gandhiji preached so solemnly even on the day before he passed away.

The wisdom of the policy of dissolving the Congress after the country had attained independence may be demonstrated in

various ways. It may, however, be urged, as has actually been done with complete success, that it would be sheer ingratitude on the part of the Indian voters not to vote to power the great organization which won freedom for them. The shallowness of such sentimental views may be proved by citing the analogies of Britain, France, and other countries whose soldiers fought for their motherland during the World Wars. None of these countries ever hesitated to recognize the self-sacrifice and self-less service of these heroes, but none ever thought of rewarding these services by making them rulers of the country by sending them to Parliament, simply because they fought for their country. The reason is obvious. Fighting requires one type of qualifications, and responsibility for administration, qualities of a quite different kind. Some of those who fought might, as they actually did, possess administrative power, and they normally competed with other candidates, but they did not expect, and the voters did not relish the idea, that the fighting by itself would be a sufficient qualification for election to the Parliament or other similar bodies which are entrusted with the difficult and responsible task of administering the affairs of a country on the successful performance of which depended the fate of independence so hardly won by them. Yet this is exactly what happened in India. I distinctly recollect that when Dr. P. C. Ghosh was first forming his Ministry in Bengal I drew his attention to this aspect of the problem. It produced no effect, but I have at least the pride and pleasure of knowing that two of the greatest men in Modern India held the same view, though I was unaware of it at the time.

When the Interim Government was formed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in September, 1946, Gandhiji expressed the view that the Ministers should be selected from among the most honest and efficient persons irrespective of the Congress or any other party. But it was not accepted. The scramble for self and power that followed among the Congress leaders immediately after the achievement of independence led Gandhiji to propose in the meeting of the All-India Congress

Committee in November, 1947, that before the corruption proceeds any further the Congress should be immediately dissolved, for it was beyond redemption. But the power-intoxicated Congress leaders did not pay any heed to their whilom leader. The Congress leaders now denoted a small group, comprising Sardar Vallabhbhai, Rajendra Prasad, Maulana Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru. Though they acted in the name, and on behalf, of the Congress, they paid but scant regard even to the President of the Congress, Acharya Kripalani. When Kripalani found that important decisions were taken in the name of the Congress without his knowledge and consent, he tendered his resignation in November, 1947, with the consent of Gandhiji. Gandhiji suggested the name of Narendra Dev as President, but the leading group did not accept it, and Rajendra Prasad resigned his Ministership to become President, without even consulting Gandhiji, perhaps the first such act of defiance or disobedience to his political *Guru* on the part of the ever-obedient Rajendra Prasad.

It was in such an atmosphere of corruption, coterie and power-politics that the Congress fought the first General Election, and fully capitalized the goodwill of the people that the great Organization had accumulated by its service to the country. It was an easy walk-over on the part of the Congress, for to the outside public Congress represented the patriotic heroes who fought for the freedom of the country, and there was no question of any difference over party programme for the simple reason that it did not exist. The election was fought (?) and won on purely personal basis, the name of the Congress working as the magic wand for inducing the people to vote. There was a popular saying to the effect that 'if the Congress selected a lamp-post we would vote for it.' Thus, instead of selecting the best talents available in the country for carrying on the administration and formulating the future policy of independent India, this task of formidable difficulty was entrusted by a small group of Congress leaders into the hands of a motley crowd who curried favour with the ruling group. Its further consequence was that men who suddenly

found themselves in high power and position, not on account of their intrinsic qualifications, but due to the favour of a group, henceforth devoted their energy to the continuance of that favour and maintenance of the power of the Congress by any means, fair or foul. As inevitably happens, there was difference and split between the leaders, and ultimately Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru alone wielded the real power, as the nominated successor of Gandhi. So most of the Congressmen veered round him and Nehru soon became the dictator and not the leader of a democratic party.

Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This was illustrated by the Congress in power. Once installed in power the whole machinery of the Government was geared to the sole objective of keeping that power by any means fair or foul. The adult franchise created a huge electorate, mostly of poor illiterate people whose votes were considered purchasable commodities, and the party in power with its great hold over capitalists had no difficulty in spending money as has recently been proved by the conduct of several candidates. The permits, licences, etc. were other means of gaining over the literate middle class voters. Temptation of giving new amenities in localities, where Congress candidate would win and the threat of withdrawing existing amenities if the candidate was defeated, had its effect. The village panchayats were in many cases the election agencies for the Congress at public cost. All these things are too well-known to need elaboration, but recently something more serious has come to light. The judgment of the Tribunal in respect of the last general election in Gonda (U. P.) for the Loksabha seat, which set aside the election of a Congress candidate, throws a lurid light on the conduct not only of the candidate but also of the officials concerned. The Tribunal, an ex-Judge, held that the Returning Officer "was instrumental in bringing about the success of...(the Congress candidate) by corrupt connivance" and he added—rightly or wrongly we cannot say—that "the *quid pro quo* was his promotion as Commissioner of...Division in November, 1962, after the

election, although he had been previously superseded". The crime was tampering with the ballot boxes between the first and second counting and invalidating more than 2,000 votes of the chief opponent of the Congress candidate. The following comments of Shri C. Rajagopalachari on this case has a much wider application : "If Government officials of the rank of District Collectors and Commissioners of a Division could be induced to give active assistance to such a crime, one can draw inferences as to the level of character to which Congress hegemony has brought down the administration in the U. P State. Lavish expenditure, entertainment and provision of transport for voters in violation of legal provisions,—these have become common enough. Purchase of blocks of votes through local commandos has become a regular practice. The courage for direct purchase of individual votes has also been acquired through the power the ruling party commands ; policemen have learnt to look on and take no notice, for it is not a 'cognizable' offence. We have seen the opposing candidates bought off on the eve of scrutiny and the Congress candidate declared elected unopposed and the performance rewarded with high office. But tampering with the ballot papers in the "sealed" boxes was not exposed as it has been done in this case." It may be mentioned in this connection that during the last General Election the constituency from which a Minister stood as a candidate was regaled with the dance of a famous dancer and his party.

These tactics cannot be applied by any other Party unless it is supplied with huge funds from outside sources, and it is said that one such party came out next best to the Congress in General Elections.

After all this, can it be contended that the result of the polls has any relation with the real voice of the people ? But the evil goes far deeper. If unworthy men secure high position and power by these means, through the favour of high command, they are bound to be full of adulation for the powers that be. Independent views and free criticism within the party vanish for ever, and the autocratic rule of a dictator

is permanently established. That is why only the form of a democratic Government alone remains in India, but there is no real democracy. An autocrat at the head of such a democracy wields greater power than any British Viceroy ever did, for his will is unchecked by his colleagues and defies public opinion with impunity on the specious plea that he is the representative of the people who have elected him to the position he holds by free (?) votes. One should not blame the late Prime Minister for holding such a position, for he was really the victim of circumstances, and even the very best of men would have succumbed like him to the lure of absolute power, and its inevitable consequence. Of him it may be truly said that he gave to the Party what was meant for the Country, and thereby degraded it from the high position it had once occupied in the heart of every Indian. As always happens, the lower ranks follow the examples of the higher, and today the old motto of the Congress—service to the country—is replaced by the more ignoble one—the service to the party. My party, right or wrong, is now the guiding principle of every Congressman. It is not a mere whim that eminent members of the Congress like Rajagopalachari, Kripalani, P. C. Ghosh and many others who were held in the highest esteem even by Gandhiji, have not only left the Congress ranks, but are now their most bitter critics. And what is still worse, the Congress moves heaven and earth to keep them away from the Parliament and treat them almost as sworn enemies.

Nehru ruled with absolute authority and could carry out anything he wished. His achievement as Prime Minister was not, however, commensurate with his undoubted talents and personality, and fell far short of public expectations. This was mainly due to his idealism, divorced from reality, which made him subordinate the interests of his Country to those of his Party and Humanity at large. Another cause of his failure was his inordinate fondness for friends and protégés, which is no doubt very laudable in a private individual, but becomes a serious defect in a Prime Minister, if it makes him appoint his

favourites to high official positions and reluctant to pay the required attention to charges of inefficiency and corruption, not to speak of taking proper steps, against them. It is not difficult to cite examples of such indulgence set up by Pandit Nehru, and followed by his subordinates, which affected the machinery of Government and left a most harmful legacy to his successors.

All these and many more characteristics of the late Prime Minister have landed India in an awful situation from which it would be very difficult for any Prime Minister to extricate her. The impasse in which we find ourselves today was brought about by a steady downward process of decline. The price of foodstuffs, for example, during the last ten years, had steadily increased at the following rate, every two years since 1955, taking the base in 1952-3 as 100 : '94·6, 103·4, 116·5, 118·4, 141·8'. Price-increase in all commodities taken together during the same period is : '99·2, 106·1, 118·7, 122·9 138·9'. This should be a corrective to those who feel that it was only after Nehru's death that all our woes were visible.

High food price is not the only crisis that faces the country today. There are two others in which the will of the late Prime Minister, unchecked by anybody, played a more dominant part. The first is the rapid development of heavy industry by borrowing money from outside. In 1960-1, India had to pay Rs. 123 crores as interest alone of this foreign loan. Nehru fondly believed that the excess steel and other productions that would result from his Five-Year Plannings would be sufficient to pay interest. Experts, other than yes-men, doubted it, and they have proved to be right. It is now admitted that the calculations of the Planning Commission have gone wrong, but nevertheless the Planning is still regarded by the Congress ruling party as a legacy of Nehru and therefore almost sacrosanct. The States do not lag behind the Union Government in pushing up loans, perhaps on the same principle. The total debt of U. P. in 1960-1 amounted to 391·62 crores. By the end of 1962-3, it had shot up to Rs. 706·84 crores the interest on which

amounts to 12 per cent. of the revenue of the State. It is interesting to note that the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission made the following observation at the beginning of August, 1964 : "While the fact of Plan implementation being defective was being increasingly realized, it had equally to be recognized that planning itself was defective". Such a confession after three Plans—covering a period of fifteen years and entailing an expenditure reaching almost an astronomical figure—is tragic indeed. How one wishes that these bitter truths should have been spoken to the late Prime Minister. Of course, Opposition leaders like Kripalani, Ranga, and Masani denounced the Planning, but the ruling party paid no heed to it, because they were sure of the majority in the Lok Sabha and had developed the habit of believing that they had the monopoly of truth and those who differ from them must certainly be wrong. No wonder that the Fourth Plan is still in sight.

We now come to the second result of the unchecked power of an idealist Prime Minister which may land India into more serious consequences than any mentioned above. It is the Foreign Policy of India which is lauded by the Congress as the *chef-d'oeuvre* of its late lamented leader. If soaring idealism, expressed in eloquent words, were the only criterion for the success of a foreign policy, the hyperbole of the Congress may have some justification. But if we take hard facts into consideration and judge the policy by its actual fruits, the judgment would be very different. Free India began with two serious problems,—Pakistan and Kashmir. Can anybody deny that under the stewardship of our most successful Foreign Minister during the last 17 years, not only has any of these problems not shown any sign of progress towards solution, but has been rendered much worse than before ? The sniping at Indians living on the border of Pakistan and the looting of their property, absolutely with impunity (except occasional verbal protest which both friends and foes have long ceased to take seriously), and the massacre and outrages worse than massacre, on men, women,

and children of the minority community in Pakistan, repeated at almost regular intervals, without any firm action on the part of the Indian Government whose leaders pledged themselves to protect the Hindus of Eastern Pakistan,—all these would go down in history as the unerring signs of a weak-kneed policy, of which the generations of Indians yet unborn would feel ashamed rather than proud, and the Minister responsible for the policy which rendered such a thing possible would ever stand condemned before the bar of public opinion.

As regards Kashmir, it is now generally recognized that it was a grievous blunder to refer the matter to U. N. O. before driving the intruders beyond the border of Kashmir,—a thing which could have been easily done within a week or so. This fatal policy has cost India dear—not only in men but in crores of rupees spent every year. There has been vacillation and lack of decision at almost every step, and today the situation is much worse than what it was seventeen years ago,—another feather to the cap of the Foreign Ministry.

But if the Foreign Minister has not solved any problem that faced him at the outset, he has created others with more disastrous consequences. The most serious of these is the policy towards China and Tibet. Anyone with a knowledge of Communism, its method of expansion, and ultimate ideal of world domination, should have thought not only thrice, but three times thrice, before placing trust in the professions of Communist China in Panchasila, and surrendering Tibet as its price. When China, in violation of its pledge to respect the internal autonomy of Tibet, overran the country, a public Convention held in Calcutta pointed out that India should at least enter a formal protest, for it was a solemn duty imposed by moral obligation to Tibet. It was further pointed out that the Chinese occupation of Tibet constituted a grave danger to our security, for Tibet would be a very good base for the Chinese aggression against India. The Prime Minister publicly ridiculed these fears in the Lok Sabha, and the Congress as a body was instructed to boycott the Convention.

The idea was, as openly expressed by some in declining the invitation to attend, that since Jawaharlal Nehru was in charge of our foreign policy, it would be sheer impertinence on the part of any one else to poke his nose into it. That is the spirit in which our foreign policy was left to the sole charge of the Foreign Minister in a democratic form of Government. Of course, it has to be admitted that there were very few members of the Cabinet whose knowledge about China and Tibet, not to speak of the world, would enable them to express any view in the matter. Such was the result of packing the Cabinet with yes-men without any proper knowledge and equipment.

For several years after the Chinese had actually been in possession of Indian territory without any opposition, the fact was deliberately kept secret from the Indian public. If any such thing had happened in any really democratic country, the Cabinet of Ministers would have to go, bag and baggage. When the fact could not be hidden any longer, and the Chinese army invaded India in full force, there was a patriotic appeal to the country to which there was a splendid response in spite of the serious lapses on the part of the Government. But there was a further surprise in store. It soon transpired that India was *absolutely unprepared*. So the great miracle happened the like of which is not recorded in the history of the world. While the Chinese rapidly advanced far into the interior and inflicted heavy casualties on the Indian army, not a single Chinese soldier is known to have been killed or made prisoner. India beat the world record. And even after this humiliating defeat and disaster the Defence Minister continued to enjoy the favour and protection of the Prime Minister until there was a revolt in the Congress party against his policy—the first and the last of its kind—and his hands were forced.

Except the policy of *Panchasila* which had such a disastrous consequence for India, the Foreign Minister of India seemed to have been quite indifferent to the momentous events in South-East Asia which are likely to have serious repercussions.

on India. The most outstanding event in recent times is the gradual expansion of Communist influence in that region. North Vietnam is already a Communist ally of China ; Cambodia has definitely aligned herself to China ; Laos is a fighting ground for the domination of Communism sponsored by China and North Vietnam ; and very recently a Communist Minister has been included in the Cabinet of Indonesia. The U.S.A. alone now stands between South Vietnam and its absorption by the Communist North Vietnam. Burma is sitting on the fence, and there are reasons to believe that she is also hesitant to offend Communist China. Any Indian, who has sincere faith in democracy, cannot remain unperturbed at the alarming situation that is steadily developing beyond our Northern and Eastern frontiers. On the west, Pakistan has publicly announced her alliance with China. A foreign writer has justly criticised the foreign policy of India in the following words : "Attentive to developments in the Congo, Cuba and Belgrade, India failed to pay sufficient attention to events in the Shan States, Vientiane and Saigon (i.e. Laos and South Vietnam) which may well affect her own security in the very near future." It is idle to stress this point any further, for the ruling party in India would resent even any hint that Nehru was remiss in his vigilance over the security of India, and would not, of course, mend its policy until the danger reaches our very door—when it may be too late.

The so-called policy of non-alignment is now a fetish with the ruling party, and any adverse comment on it is regarded as a sacrilege. I use the adjective "so-called" because our non-alignment does not stand in the way of begging for help from big powers when we find ourselves in difficulties. It is worthy of consideration whether it is not more humiliating to approach an outsider with begging bowl whenever any occasion arises, than to enter into a regular settlement with a country which would enable us to demand, as of right, help from a big power when the stipulated need arises. At least on the face of it, it appears to be a more dignified course,

but, as the materials on which a proper policy can be judged are kept a close secret, it is difficult to make any definite or categorical assertion. But there should be a convention that the ruling party should discuss the foreign policy with a select body of experts outside its own circle, so that fresh points of view may be considered. This is the least that can be demanded in view of the depth of degradation to which India's political status has fallen in the world outside. Free India in 1947 occupied a position of great prestige all over Asia and Africa, for her precept and example inspired many other nations to fight successfully the battles for freedom. India was held in high esteem and came to be almost regarded as the natural leader of rejuvenated Asia and Africa. India has completely lost that position. The humiliating defeat sustained by India at the hands of the Chinese has come as challenge to India's claim as a great power. Many believe that such lowering of the prestige of India was the main objective of the last campaign of China. If so, China has completely succeeded in achieving that object. It would be idle to deny that India's prestige is now at a very low ebb all over Asia and Africa. Indians are now being evicted from Burma, their rights are curtailed and status lowered in Ceylon, and Pakistan humiliates India at every step. That India has few friends in Asia and Africa has been amply demonstrated by the attitude of Asian and African powers towards the Chinese aggression against India.

Such is the result of the foreign policy pursued by India during the last seventeen years, and regarded by every Congressman as the most brilliant achievement of free India under the most brilliant leadership of the Congress. It does not differ much from the miserable home policy whose evils and miseries have been described above in detail. It has not evoked equally angry reaction simply because its evils are not equally patent at the present moment, and do not directly hit the common man, as the high price, adulteration and scarcity of food, corruption from top to bottom and inefficiency of administration do. But in spite of self-adulation and

vainglorious boasts of the Congress, and the consolation held out by its more moderate section that the end of all miseries—which are but a passing phase—is within sight, any dispassionate observer must agree that free India stands today on the brink of a precipice. It is rushing headlong towards destruction. The question, how to save the situation, must be the most anxious thought in the mind of every patriotic Indian. As I have tried to show in the preceding pages, the perilous situation is mainly the result of the unscrupulous rule of the Congress autocracy in the past and aristocracy in the present. So long as it lasts there is no redemption for India. It must therefore be the united effort of every patriotic individual or party in India to pull down the citadel of iniquity that the Congress has built. I believe there is a general agreement on this point among non-Congress parties, but they cannot act together on account of differences on other points. It should be recognized, however, that these differences, however important they might appear in the abstract, have little more than a mere academic value at present, for there is no reasonable chance for any political party to realize its ideals so long as the Congress is entrenched in its present citadel. Both policy and patriotism demand that for the time being the different political parties must place a moratorium on their special doctrines, and their only war cry should be to remove the Congress autocracy and establish a real democracy in India. This may possibly be done by an electoral agreement on this single issue. Once the Congress is driven from power and true democracy is established, the rest would follow, if the Indians possess any real worth. This must be done without the least delay, for it may be difficult to change horses in mid-stream.

## STATE OF THE NATION

*Hem Barua, Member of Parliament*

On 19th September, 1947 Mr. Nehru said : "I am not satisfied with anything in India, and had not been for thirty years. Of course, we must meet the situation in every way we can, partly by psychology and partly by force. If I may draw on my socialist background, what is happening now is to a large extent an upheaval in the lower middle classes,—the classes that first supported Hitler. When society is upset, strange elements come to the surface."

On another occasion, Mr. Nehru ~~said~~ : "India's struggle today is part of the great struggle which is going on all over the world for the emancipation of the oppressed. Essentially, this is an economic struggle, with hunger and want as its driving forces, although it puts on nationalist and other dresses."

Mr. Nehru is no more with us today. Mr. Nehru ~~nourished~~ rich dreams and great hopes for the country. Despite the fact that he wielded immense power and authority, popularity and unquestioned leadership, the most unfortunate part of the episode is that most of his dreams remain unrealised. This is the inevitable conclusion one arrives at if the situation in the country is objectively appraised. What is the basic reason behind this state of affairs ? Is it inertia of the people, as often alleged ? The reply is ingrained in what Mr. Nehru himself says in his *Whither India* : "Thought which is not meant to lead to action has been called an abortion ; action which is not based on thought is chaos and confusion".

While our movement for freedom threw up, through a process of struggle and suffering, a new concept of nationalism, it failed however to imbue the nationalist upsurge with ideas of a resurgent economy and social ideals. In India the

freedom movement assumed a national rather than political character where different shades of political-cum-economic opinions found a common platform. Gandhiji who spear-headed the nationalist struggle for freedom in our country and created the will and urge for it in the people had his own socio-economic ideals which neither he nor the great organisation that he led ever propagated with the *elan* necessary for such purposes. Gandhiji drew his own picture of a happy and prosperous India in the sunshine of freedom, but then, that picture of his was more metaphysical than one related to an age of science and technology.

With Mr. Nehru, socialism was a slogan, a romanticised gaze at things. On the capacity to canalise a nation's energies into channels of creative responses lies the success of leadership. It is more true in the case of a nation such as ours emerging into the sunshine of freedom after an epoch of political and economic travail and torpor. To be honest, have our leadership succeeded in sizing themselves up to this compulsion? Have they succeeded in generating the dynamo of social mobility in the country and charge it with passion and precision, decision and direction? A few streamlined administrative buildings or steel plants cannot be the barometers of real progress. The most glaring fact is that India's poverty still remains and increases in the broad masses of our community. Despite huge borrowings and spendings, there has been no appreciable rise in our living standard. Besides, corruption is eating into the vitals of the nation. The Five Year Plans invariably miss the targets; industrial progress is tardy and agriculture is in the doldrums. We call ourselves a resurgent nation, but where is the evidence of resurgence except in the phenomenon of unprecedented population growth? Eight million new babies a year. True it is that it is difficult to achieve results within a brief period of sixteen years, but has any beginning been made towards that direction in any solid, tangible way?

We have completed already two Five Year Plans; at present we are voyaging in the mid-currents of the Third Plan.

True it is that in the procedure of implementation, aims and aspirations, democratic planning is different from planning under dictatorship. What democratic planning naturally aims at is release of the springs of human creativity and not naked utilisation of man as mere "factors of production". It is a co-operative endeavour and its ideals are shared on a triangular basis : planners, government and people. In the light of it, what do we find about our Plans ? Are the ideals shared and the springs of creative responses in the people released ? To be precise, this is not possible with hunger and poverty, ill health and ignorance, drudgery and exploitation spreading their powerful grip and tentacles all around. Inspite of the much-publicised Five Year Plans, there is a chronic shortage of food, and consumer goods also. Besides, unemployment remains a problem and is getting stabilised at a dismal level. During the Plan period between March 1961 and September 1963, it is pointed out that there has been an increased employment of 14.4 lakhs in the country. But should we forget that out of this number 7.2 lakhs are absorbed in the Government services which means expansion of the administrative paraphernalia only ? It merely helps to increase the strength of Parkinson's army. Where are the signs of buoyancy ? The Planning Commission have themselves admitted in their review of the second half of last year that "imbalance" in our economy continues. The Plan has failed to make any tangible impact on the productive forces of the country. There are people who often say that democracy and rapid economic growth are incompatible things. But this should never mean that the people are to be perpetually starved even of the bare necessities of life and compelled to tighten their belts in the hope of something grand and magnificent on some distant date.

True, the economy of few countries can legitimately claim to be selfsufficient, except that of perhaps USA and USSR. What our Plans should primarily aim at is a moderately sound economic basis, but then, we are deficient even in this basic minimum. Now it is said that due to (i) compulsions of

defence, and (ii) pressure of new migrants in their thousands to this country from East Pakistan, our economy is showing signs of an unpredictable nature. If our economy were basically sound, the latter factor atleast would not have produced the strain as it has produced at present. About defence, no developing country can ever aspire to be self-sufficient in this direction. What best we can hope to do is to acquire that much of strength that might enable us to hold the line against external aggression till such time when assistance arrives from friendly countries. What a developing economy can aspire at best is what they call "military insurance", and not so-called self-sufficiency in defence potential. To aim at total self-sufficiency in defence is to damage the basic foundation of our economic planning.

There has been planned economy in our country for the last thirteen years. The Second Plan like the First had its own pitfalls ; thus, the process of failure once started has an inherent tendency to lengthen its shadow from one plan to another. The Second Plan, for instance, fixed its target to raise national income by 25 p.c., but ended up by raising an increase that is less than 20 p.c. Various factors are responsible for Plans thus missing the target. One of them is faulty, rather sluggish utilisation of resources. *The Economic Survey of 1961* admits this fact thus :

"The prompt utilisation of assistance from a number of sources and a variety of requirements necessarily poses problems which would need increasing attention."

The UN Economic Survey (1961) says that "India's economy should not only expand rapidly, but must at the same time become self-reliant and self-sufficient". This very survey says that India's rate of industrial production, 3.5 p.c., compares unfavorably with 5 p.c. achieved by 25 out of 31 under-developed countries listed in the survey.

During 1953 to 1959 our national income grew only by 16 p.c. In Japan it rose during these years by 62 p.c., in Burma by 31 p.c., in Cambodia by 26 p.c., in Indonesia by 21 p.c. and

in Thailand by 28 p.c. This shows that we have a very long way to travel.

What is the actual position about our national income ? During 1961-1962 our national income rose by 3.5 p.c. only as against the plan target of 30 p.c. rise on an over-all basis. To achieve this target, it becomes imperative that there should be atleast 6 p.c. rise per annum in our national income.

It is not national income alone, the success of planned economy depends on its capacity to raise private consumption also. India's per capita private consumption during 1950-1959 rose only by 1.2 p.c. per annum as against 6.8 p.c. in Japan, 3.8 p.c. in Burma and the Philippines and 2.2 p.c. in Thailand during the same period. What about industrial expansion ? It slipped from 12 p.c. in 1960 to 8 p.c. in 1961. According to the latest half-yearly (July-December, 1963) report of the Planning Commission, industrial expansion has recovered over that in 1962. The average monthly index for the first ten months of 1963 is 8.7 p.c. higher compared with that of the corresponding period of 1962. Yet then, this does not come up to the rate of 11 p.c. targeted in the Third Plan.

It is said that our export earnings would increase from Rs. 667 crores to Rs. 840 crores in the final year of the Plan. Likewise it is envisaged that maintenance imports would show a gradual decline from Rs. 746 crores to Rs. 715 crores in the final year. During the Second Plan, there had been a marginal improvement in our export trade i.e. we progressed from an average of Rs. 609 crores to Rs. 614 crores. As against this, the import bill jumped from Rs. 700 crores to Rs. 1,000 crores per annum. Of course, according to the latest half-yearly report, exports, including re-exports, increased from Rs. 63.19 crores in July, 1963 to Rs. 72.71 crores in December, 1963. The imports decreased from Rs. 89.54 crores to Rs. 74.79 crores. These are helpful signs. Yet the fact remains that maintenance imports are eating substantially into our foreign assets. The situation is further complicated because there is no adequate untied foreign exchange to pay for maintenance imports.

Another factor to be noted is the quantum of borrowings from the Reserve Bank of India. According to the latest economic review "despite liberalisation of the Reserve Bank's lending policy, effective from the end of October 1963, the borrowings from the Reserve Bank of India were low,—Rs. 6 crores during the October-December 1963 quarter against Rs. 16 crores during the corresponding quarter of the previous years". On the other hand, our indebtedness in foreign assets is increasing. Of the total requirements of the public sector in the First Plan, 10 p.c. came from foreign aid ; in the Second Plan, the percentage rose to 24 ; in the Third Plan, it rose to 43.

Industrial expansion apart, no country can reach the take-off stage in economy unless agriculture is revolutionised. For us, agriculture constitutes the most vital sector of our economy ; so far, it is our largest private sector. One of the reasons contributing to the low rise in our national income is our near-stagnant agricultural production ; it is a serious matter that our agricultural target, however modest it might be, has never come anywhere near fulfilment. Our Third Plan target is 6 p.c. increase per annum in food production, but our actual performance is the lamentable quantum of 1.6 p.c. only. According to the latest Plan appraisal (July-December, 1963) "agricultural production declined by 3.3 p.c. compared to the previous year. The output of rice fell from 34 million tons to 31.5 million tons. Wheat production was 7.5 p.c. less and barley 21.5 p.c. less".

In our country 70 p.c. of the labour force are engaged in agriculture whereas in the USA only 10 p.c. are likewise engaged. But then, here is our country that has to go to a highly-industrialised country like the USA with begging bowls for morsels of food. When our Government spokesmen declare that there is no food crisis in the country, they conveniently forget that but for the cushion provided by PL 480 there would have been famine, starvation and death by thousands here.

The result of all this is steep rise in prices. The rise

cannot be arrested unless the causes leading to this spiralling up of prices are removed. During the Second Plan period, it was of the order of 25 p.c. Somehow or rather, prices are not stabilised ; they are determined only by blackmarket conditions. As a result of it, the value of the Indian rupee is falling. To quote from the report of the City Bank of New York : "Annual fall in the value of money in India worked to higher than that in 27 other countries".

To quote a Swedish economist : "The reader may have recalled that the word 'plan' has a double meaning. It can mean intention, it can mean central co-ordination". The preamble to the Plan convinces one of the basic objective of the Government. But intentions unless supported by actual performance are like paper-boats that mean nothing, except false delight. Mere good blue-prints are not results.

What is missing in India is the general will to work and implement the Plans ; somehow or rather, the Plans have failed to provide the emotional knot, that urge among the people that makes efforts productive. There is progress, only apparently, a progress that does not show any dynamism either of growth or spirit. At best, it is progress within the four walls of a stagnant pool. To be very specific, not to speak of eliminating poverty, unless conscious and deliberate efforts are made towards minimising its sting, there can be no progress worth the name. Nothing can be more revealing than what Barbera Ward says in her *India and the West* : "Behind the Indian figures and statistics lie the realities of children without bread, men without work, women without hope. If these do not move us to action, the outer form of our society may survive but its inner spirit will have withered away. Then, like the myriad proud civilisations upon which 'the sentence of the Watchers' has already gone forth, we shall be carted off this great stage of this world into the dust and debris of history there to join the melancholy line of past societies which, at the crucial test, could not change and advance in time".

If we fail to read the warning of crisis on the wall of time

and lack in vision and will to modulate the sinews of our economy to the compulsions of growth, the future of our country can very well be imagined than described.

In the economic field, our progress is slow and sluggish. In matters social, ours is an age of conflicting passion and tension. This is natural that the aspirations of our people, divided into groups and sections, mainly linguistic, regional and religious, are bound to be conflicting against the background of broadbased ideals of nationalism ; these by their very nature are bound to be self-contradictory. It is because of this inherent contradiction that broadbased socio-economic movements in this country very often than not suffer setbacks. This contradiction generally gets reflected in the working of the political parties themselves. Except ventilating at times certain local grievances of the people, our political parties have so far failed to serve as effective weapons of social transformation. The effect of it on the morale of the people might ultimately become disastrous ; unfortunately, the process has already started. Judging from the recent communal disturbances in eastern India, it becomes clear that political parties are steadily losing grip on the tide of events ; their popular appeal is at its lowest. The communal trouble-shooters refuse to listen to the voice of wisdom of the political parties ; they get quietened only when the troops arrive on the scene. In a democracy, it is the writ of the political parties that should hold good with the people ; the reverse of it is portentious.

Objectively speaking, nationalism in India is a new concept that took shape and emerged under British administration in this country. Whatever unity India had prior to the 19th century was basically cultural and social. Though in a sense it helped to diversify our social structure, even the parallel cultural pattern introduced by Islam into India during the 14th century became ultimately a part of the broad Indian system. Cultural integration was there, but what about political and administrative integration ?

Throughout the long corridors of history, attempts were made to achieve integration in administrative and political

matters, but unfortunately all efforts proved *effete*. Efforts in this direction were made under the Maurjyas as also under the Mughals. Akbar and Aurangzeb in particular made serious efforts at political and administrative integration of India,—the series of battles waged by the former against the Sultanates of the Deccan are an instance in point. Similarly, different rulers of the Gangetic plains during different periods of history made attempts at political and administrative integration ; none of these efforts however proved successful due to different forces that seemed insurmountable. A broad cultural pattern existed for ages ; but this must be borne in mind that no emotional integration on the basis merely of a broad cultural federation unless supported by an integrated political and administrative setup is possible. Under the auspices of the Mughals, the imperial idea however grew and got stabilised making it possible for the subsequent British rulers to institute a consolidated political and administrative structure on the basis of this idea. This the British achieved through certain farsighted measures such as (i) a uniform system of communication, posts, telegraphs and railways, (ii) a uniform system of currency, and (iii) a uniform pattern of education for the whole country.

Besides this, the nationalist movement for freedom waged through sixty years of struggle and sacrifice by the people as also "the recovery of Indian history in the 19th century" mainly through art, literature and archaeological discoveries also contributed to the steady growth of a national image. To quote Dr. K. M. Panikkar : "That history not only bore witness to a continuing civilisation in India, with its achievements in many fields, religion, literature, philosophy, art, architecture etc. to which every part of India had an equal right, but to a glorious tradition of cultural expression of overseas and across deserts which founded cities, states and empires and actively carried on an international life in the not too remote past, created in the mind of the people of India a pride of 'Indianness'. Without this self-image, the political unity of India would have been artificial".

Freedom has thrown a new responsibility on us, the responsibility of giving this national image a clear profile and to stabilise it in all its dimensions. No political or administrative integration can stabilise itself unless it is reinforced by cultural and emotional integration as a whole. The cultural patterns of a decadent society are naturally patterns of despair and frustration. Our culture on no account should encourage defeat. To say with Goethe, a nation in ascendancy is invariably objective in its approach and attitude. Our culture must not on any account be allowed to rouse partisan passion or spirit. Our culture must express the aspirations and transforming possibilities of the people as a whole. Unfortunately, what is happening in our country at present is the reverse of it. The ugly forces of revivalism have raised their heads.

When the nation was engaged in the struggle for freedom, nationalism was an all-comprehensive idea that overpowered all sectional interests and aspirations. It would not however be true to say that sectional aspirations were obliterated completely from the psychology of the people ; what happened was that they lay dormant under the blanket of wider and deeper ideals and interests. With freedom, these dormant forces of sectional interest and group-psychology have come all at a time to the surface. Naturally, these forces create social tension, thus throwing the ideas of achieving social transformation in the light of socialist and progressive ideas into the backyard of progress.

Where do you find today the effervescence that the urge for freedom once created in this country ? The original mental stir and enthusiasm generated during the struggle for freedom, instead of being canalised into creative responses in the light of emanicipation, is being wasted in desultory adventures today. Our freedom for some mysterious reason has not been able to generate the dynamo of social mobility so necessary for all creative efforts. It is an agonising experience to note that free India is today plunged in a mental pool of stagnation, having lost the dynamism that characterised

the age of struggle. That sense of urgency constituting the elan vital of a nation emerging into freedom at the end of long suppression under foreign rule that "drained the dependency dry", to use Gandhiji's words, is nowhere to be seen in the present context. I am confident, unless the old urge of passion that gave distinction to the age of dependence is revived, nothing will be achieved, not even emotional integration. It is true that our people were frustrated under foreign rule, but what sustained them during those days of torpor was the dynamism of an ideal that was directed towards making India free. In the condition of freedom when they discover that this dynamism of spirit has lost much of its rhythm and romance, their frustration naturally enough becomes deeper in dimension. And the pity is what is there to sustain them in this desert of despair? This is why we find today sectional interests of castes and communities overpowering broader ideals and impulses of life. *Pari passu* with it, the failure of our leaders of society to create a climate of confidence in the country is one more reason that has led people into the narrow cabins of castes and communities; there has been a steady erosion of confidence everywhere in our country today.

Freedom has opened the floodgates of opportunities; as a result of it, people everywhere long submerged under foreign rule are seized of a restless impulse to grow and develop. What we find today in our society is an unprecedented restiveness, an acute struggle and competition in coming up. This in itself is not bad. But the misfortune is that this competition, instead of being 'dammed' into channels of creative responses, is being irrigated into conflicting social passion and tension, malady and mal-adjustment. Our society today presents a psychologically interesting experience.

This is a sad commentary on ourselves that the social mind today is experiencing a slow death and that is too without regrets on the part of society as a whole; it is individual aspirations verging on selfish interests rather than the social mind, that makes life worth aspiring for, that have

come to the surface with disturbing challenges and onslaughts. We who are in public life suffer also from a sort of myopic vision in the sense that there is no attempt on our part whatsoever to analyse and work for a harmonised impulse of life that might ultimately re-fashion the social mind in place of the individual which is the bane of our society today.

To me the urgent need of the hour is re-organisation of our industrial and economic development in a way that might be calculated to bring the submerged regions to a level that some parts of our country have already attained. This might not be a magic formula. Yet, this might lead to a certain rehabilitation of the mind. Such a measure would atleast help to destroy the dissipating sense of isolation from which the submerged regions generally suffer. They must be encouraged to feel that they are equal partners in the onward march of the nation to achievement. We have an Industrial Policy Resolution, but do we have an industrial Master Plan prepared with an eye to regional needs and disparities ? Social transformation towards integration in this country can be possible only through a democratic sense of urgency and an economic plan prepared and worked to destroy deficiencies located not only in isolated groups of people but also in economically retarded regional pockets.

Besides these social problems, the question of an official language for the country has generated much froth and heat, conflict and controversy. The protagonists of Hindi say that "Hindi must be the official language" of our country. The opponents twit and say : "Hindi must first go to school". True it is that India needs an official language that breathes of the aroma of the soil, a language through which our people would hear and understand the throb of our national life. In fact, how can democracy work and fulfil its mission if the people are denied the opportunity of communicating their urges and impulses in a language that they can comprehend ? How can the mechanism of our Constitution work if the people do not get an opportunity to participate in the national resurgence because of the barrier imposed by language ?

We must remember,—particularly the protagonists of Hindi should remember that Hindi is accorded the status of Official language in the Constitution, not because this language is better developed than any other regional language, nor because it is rich and copious in literary wealth, nor because it is an effective instrument of diplomacy, science and technology, but because it is an Indian language that is spoken by a solid block of majority and is more or less understood throughout the country. On no account official status is accorded to a language as an award for its literary wealth and merit.

There are certain apprehensions about making Hindi the only Official language of the country ; it is feared that it might ultimately swamp and swallow the regional languages which are also national languages according to the Constitution and retard their natural growth. As the composite fragrance of a lotus is enshrined in the individual petals holding together, the composite strength of India depends to a large extent on the strength and beauty that the regional languages acquire. On no account, out of over-enthusiasm for Hindi, any attempt be made to dissipate or devitalise them.

The other apprehension is that while English imposes an even and equitable disadvantage on all, Hindi reposes cent per cent advantage on 42 p. c. of our population and imposes hundred per cent disadvantages on the rest. Why should we forget this aspect of the problem ? This anomaly is bound to get reflected in the employment pattern of the country. Despite the successive Five Year Plans, unemployment figures have not declined in this country. What would be the position if Hindi is made the sole official language ? While unemployment figures in the Hindi-speaking areas are expected to register a sharp decline, a good thing in all, those in the non-Hindi speaking areas are bound to shoot up which would be nothing but a disastrous thing for the nation as a whole. The question of language cannot be isolated from the question of economic consequences that are bound to flow from such a situation. This must be borne in mind that on no account should such an imbalance in the employment pattern be

allowed to occur. On no account should an individual be loaded with an advantage simply because he happens to be born in a favoured language-group.

On the question of adopting English as one of our Official languages, this can be said that nobody could be happy over India having to accept a foreign language as its own. Sir David Eccles, an ex-British Secretary for Education, is not particularly wrong when he said sometime back in Rome that the Indian Prime Minister (Mr. Nehru) in accepting English as an associate Official language has accepted defeat in the hands of Britain. But then, defeat or no defeat, what is the way out ? The precious unity of our country, this dearly nurtured edifice, cannot be allowed to be destroyed on the altar of divided minds and emotions, for, that would mean dismal consequence for the nation. Unfortunately, the decision to exclude English might lead to further vivisection of our country. Would it not be utter folly and stupidity if we create conditions that might lead to such a tragic consequence ?

It might sound unpatriotic to say so,—but this must be pointed out, if necessary in a brutal way, that our political unity as it is today cannot be taken for granted. Should we forget that through the long corridors of history, India had been a land of sub-nations ? To say that it is not the authentic image of India would be historically wrong. It is on this account that we have to persistently canalise all our efforts and energies to strengthen the citadel of political cohesion into a bastion of national solidarity. Any negligence on our part would be criminally unpatriotic. Taking all these facts and forces into account, what is the harm, if, in order to serve the vital interests of the nation, we adopt two official languages ? This is a compulsion thrust on us by history and destiny. By our haphazard and lopsided approach to language, should we ever try to write off South India and other non-Hindi speaking areas from the map of India ?

Let us not forget that there are countries in the world that have more than one official language. What about

Canada, for instance ? Though the French are in a minority, their language is given an equal official status with the language, of the majority i.e. English in Canada. Let us take another example. During her freedom struggle, it was proclaimed that Gaelic would be the national language of Ireland. But after freedom was achieved, English came to be accorded the same official status as Gaelic. Article 4 of the Irish Constitution provides thus :

“The National language of the Irish Free State is the Irish language, but the English language shall be equally recognised as an official language”.

We must note that there is no provision in the Irish Constitution to ultimately banish English for the sake of Gaelic in Ireland as we have in our Constitution which is the pivotal point of all controversy. In the interest of national cohesion and solidarity which is a dream with us all, all right-thinking men in the country should welcome a move on the line of the Irish Constitution on the question of our official language. Exclusion of one by the other is pseudo-patriotism, it cannot be the way to right solution. By understanding and judicious application, forces that are creating discord and dissension today must be blunted down to the largest possible minimum. And thus, all apprehension of one section of the community being swamped by another, must be removed and reduced.

Under the auspices of Mr. Nehru, it is on international affairs primarily that we have concentrated our focus during the last seventeen years. This pre-occupation even at the risk of neglecting national affairs has resulted in the focus being lopsided. India seemed to gain some prestige initially on account of her declared policy of non-involvement in the naked tensions between the two power blocks. But no foreign policy, much less non-alignment, is destined to succeed unless it is sustained on a basis of sound economic and military strength at home. We seemed to have forgotten this aspect of the problem all these years till the Chinese opened our eyes, if they are open at all, by their naked

aggression on our territory in October-November, 1962. It won't be wrong to say that never was India humiliated as she has been humiliated today before the eyes of the world. China had not only occupied by force 14,000 sq. miles of our territory in Ladakh and compelled India to demilitarise NEFA, but also succeeded in building the image of a 10-foot yellow-man casting an ominous shadow on the whole of South-east Asia.

The aggression of 1962 has brought our relation with China into a new focus. That, prior to this blatant incident, we lived in a world of illusions and pious intentions so far China is concerned is an undeniable fact. That we have come to realise that the destiny of our nation is governed by demands of harsh reality and not merely by those of pious intentions is also a fact. Mr. Nehru was absolutely right when he said : "We are getting out of touch with the realities of the modern world". Our President, Dr. Radhakrishnan had gone a step further when he said that we are guilty of "credulity and negligence". These are noble confessions capable of enthusing the nation into a new level of consciousness. We have at least come to know of the true character of the Chinese, their national chauvinism and its compulsions, expansionist attitudes and aspirations, intransigence and imperialist designs.

We placed too much faith in Panchsheel and thought all along, perhaps a little foolishly, that China was an honest partner to this doctrine. A simple reference to the following incident will prove how wrong our estimate was. Mr. Cheng Wen-tien, Chinese Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, was dismissed. And why ? Because this Minister was "a right opportunist who had propounded the erroneous view that peaceful co-existence in accordance with the Five Principles (Panchsheel) and Bandung would be the basis of China's foreign policy". From this, it is evident that with China, Panchsheel was a tool to advance her old imperialistic designs ; it was never an abiding faith with her inspiring international relations.

Before returning to China and political situation in the country, a word must be said about our foreign policy. A nation's foreign policy must have a practical bias and should be conditioned primarily by national interests. Under the impact of new alignment of forces, the world that was so long bi-polar in its structure is today tending to become polycentric and multipolar in its composition. There is a new confrontation of values today against the background of which the old dialogue between alignment and non-alignment loses much of its edges and meaning. It is a sterile debate. In the context of international forces today, all nations are aligned in a sense and yet they are non-aligned.

Today who can suggest that India should align herself and be a satellite of some power, big or small? On the contrary, who can honestly suggest that because she is non-aligned, India should cripple and confine herself in an atmosphere of grand isolation? Non-alignment is India's polestar of destiny and those who say, because of our heavy dependence on Western defence-aid in our hour of crisis, our non-alignment has of late become a paper slogan, are sadly mistaken. But unfortunately what we find about our foreign policy is that it suffers from a certain amount of emotional and psychological bias for or against this bloc or that bloc. To me, the Anglo-French attack on Suez is as much a reprehensible act as the rape of Hungary by Soviet Russia. While the one is condemned with gusto, the other is condemned by silence. We must try to work for international friendship rather than wreck it by thoughtless platitudes on the one hand and by vacillating weaknesses in the critical moment of history on the other.

The Chinese who think that the world is divided basically into two antagonistic camps and the co-operation between the two is not possible and that there is no alternative and therefore no non-alignment, are introducing a dangerous philosophy into International relations. They have failed to read, realise and understand the dynamics of change. Much of the ideological edges of nations are being chiselled off

today. The "hot line" between the Kremlin and the White House to relieve Cold War tensions is a symbol of developing international goodwill, inspite of ideological divisions. Peking's newly-established friendship with Pakistan is symptomatic, because, it is prompted by power-politics and other opportunistic considerations rather than a genuine desire for international peace and understanding. The misfortune born of this Peking-Pakistan axis is of course ours, for, the chosen theatre of operation for Sino-Pak honeymoon is India.

China has befriended Pakistan, a country of SEATO alliance. The question arises : has China allowed ideological considerations to overrule partnership ? If China has not, then why rage and rumble, when India, without betraying her basic policy of non-alignment, leans in her hour of crisis on this bloc or that for defence-aid ? We must not forget that the choice before the nation today is between freedom and slavery under the Chinese. I am confident, the Indian people are not prepared to accept the latter. At present we are oscillating between two contradictory facts *vis-a-vis* China : one, the threat of war poised against us by China and the other, the carrot of peace dangled before us by the Colombo Powers. In fact, we are confronted today by two ceasefire lines : one imposed unilaterally by the Chinese on us, and the other by the Colombo Powers. The present stalemate on the frontier has proved advantageous to the Chinese ; our position is rendered more difficult. One glaring advantage accruing for the Chinese is that they are maintaining pockets of their troops in the 40-kilometre demilitarised zone both in Ladakh and NEFA without any let or hindrance from us. Our Government should tell the Colombo Powers that it is high time for them to declare to the world that China refuses to accept the proposals ; to allow further drift in the situation will ultimately be detrimental to our interests. Or else, we must ourselves say that because of Chinese intransigence, the Colombo proposals are dead for us.

What are our attitudes and achievements at home and abroad *vis-a-vis* the Chinese ? True it is that never was the

response of our people as solid and spontaneous, quick and vehement as when the Chinese aggressed on our territory. It, won't be an exaggeration to say that the whole nation rose like one man. Patriotism got inflamed with a rare passion ; once again was demonstrated the stern will of our people not to allow freedom to be jeopardised. But unfortunately, with the declaration of unilateral cease-fire by the Chinese, once again complacency has set in everywhere, thus paralysing thought and action. Where is the evidence of Emergency from the Central Secretariat down to Connaught Place in India's Capital or anywhere in the country ? We must not forget that liberty is like a tender plant nurtured in the soul of a nation.

We cannot be sure of the Chinese ; their actions belie their professions. As our Defence Minister said sometime back in Washington, they may choose their own time and place for attack. Besides, on the Defence Minister's own admission, the Chinese have recently built up on a more massive military scale on our frontier than what they did prior to the attack of October, 1962. This poses a serious threat to our freedom. We must on no account slacken our efforts at mobilising national strength to meet this challenge posed by the Chinese.

In order to achieve this objective, the nation must be strong both economically and militarily. The metaphysical slogan of peace and non-violence must not be allowed to deter this process, nor should "credulity and negligence" be allowed to overpower our will to resist. To achieve this objective, the one thing most essential is national will to resist and consolidated effort to implement this will and urge. What one finds today is unfortunately a slackening of the sinews of this impulse. The crisis today is deepening with the new alliance between China and Pakistan ; the intentions of both these countries are openly hostile to us.

No war is fought by machines alone. Behind every machine, there are many men and behind every man in the front, there are atleast fifteen men in the industrial and

economic life of the nation. These men with their productive efforts have to sustain the fighting man in the front. Over and above this, it is the human population in the modern context that fights and wins war. Machines are only a weapon. This is how liberty is safeguarded from the onslaughts of unscrupulous enemies. By all standards, China is an unscrupulous enemy, and for us to relapse once again into an "atmosphere of unreality", to use Mr. Nehru's words, would be dangerous.

Internationally, China's role is ominous ; we forget this fact only at our peril. China wants to dominate Asia and Africa by cold war tactics ; her border agreement with Nepal, Pakistan and Burma, and Trade and Air agreements with Ceylon and Pakistan are not isolated events. They are a part of a carefully planned strategy of sinister design. China has been very active in the African continent from the time she was introduced to the Afro-Asian world at Bandung in 1955. Her interest embraces all the fields, diplomatic and commercial, political and economic, cultural and social. During the last four years, China's export figures have impressively gone up over her import figures. What about us ? We simply live in a world of illusions into which solid facts do not impinge.

Our external publicity is awfully poor. The pet argument offered on this ground is the paucity of funds. But then, have we ever taken into consideration the fact that even within the scope of available resources, our publicity is poor both in standard and vigilance ? One instance : as soon as the NEFA crisis came to a head, the Chinese released well-documented literature in the Japanese language with a view to enlighten the Japanese people on the India-China border problem. And what did we do ? We simply dumped our Embassy at Tokyo with a few bundles of literature written in English to enlighten a people on a vital problem for us, a people whose knowledge of English is unfortunately limited. The failure of our diplomatic Missions in the dissemination of information and failure to keep themselves abreast with political developments are too well-known to be repeated.

Let us cite another instance : China's total Broadcasting time to Egypt and Central African countries during 1956 in English was only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours per week. By 1961, this jumped to  $110\frac{1}{2}$  hours per week in English alone, apart from broadcasts in language like Swahili, Arabic and Chinese. We must not forget that in total broadcasting hours, China is today second in the world. But what about us ? Ours is a sordid tale of half-heartedness and indifference, lack of will and capacity to forge ahead. Our slipshod conduct over the recent VOA deal is an instance in point.

Pakistan's spite against us is something deeply rooted in her psychology ; it is the result of the bitter memories of partition. Even if the Kashmir problem is solved to the satisfaction of Pakistan, it is difficult to say that relations between us and that country would register a magic improvement. This does not mean that efforts are not to be made persistently towards the improvement of relations between these two land masses of the sub-continent, India and Pakistan. It is sad to note that the relations as they are, between these two countries, are beyond repair. Yet, we must not despair. New avenues of friendship and co-operation must be opened and fortified into stable relations. Unfortunately, it is here where the thinking of Western powers goes completely wrong. They seem to think that the magic wand to peaceful co-existence between the two countries lies in the solution of the Kashmir problem. And once it is solved, both India and Pakistan would jointly stand up and fight the Chinese menace. In this connection, the *Daily Express* may be quoted. It tells UK and USA thus : "Tell Mr. Nehru to settle his quarrel with Pakistan, quit Kashmir and get every Indian soldier into position to face the threat from China". What a mischievous suggestion ! I am afraid, even if the Kashmir problem is solved according to the wishes of Sheikh Abdullah, the deep-rooted hostility of Pakistan due mainly to the disparity of size between the two countries and other psychological reasons is bound to continue. If some of these psychological reasons could be reduced or minimised, then alone an atmosphere

of amity and friendship between the two countries could be possible.

Of late, various suggestions towards the solution of the so-called Kashmir problem like King Charlie's head are coming up again and again. If Kashmir is an integral part of India, then what is there to solve ! Our emphasis in the Security Council should shift from Pakistan as an aggressor in Kashmir to this fact. Our repeated plea on the first score has not so far yielded any tangible result. On the other-hand, this has made Pakistan's attitude more stiff and tough. The reaction of such an attitude on the minorities living in Pakistan becomes too horrid for description. Writing about the latest exodus of minority communities from East Pakistan to India, Rev. N.A. Kirkwood, Liaison Officer for Church World Service, says :

"A book could be written on the atrocities, shooting, bayoneting, baton attacks and raping inflicted by the East Pakistan Rifles and Ansar personnel of the East Pakistan Border Forces upon the fleeing refugees. Stories of looting and of the abduction of tribal maidens by Muslim men of the area are common. More could be written concerning reasons for the fear and insecurity which caused this mass exodus of these minority groups into the Garo Hills from this border strip of East Pakistan".

Again, this is what Mr. Nehru said in Parliament on March 2, 1964 :

"The reason for this exodus is that these Hindu and Christian members of the minority community in East Pakistan have been compelled to leave their ancestral homes due to organised large-scale looting, arson, kidnapping and forcible occupation of their lands by the members of the majority community with the connivance of the Pakistan Police and the Village Defence Corps known as Ansars."

Unfortunately our Government have not viewed this problem with the seriousness it deserves. Why ? Because

they are afraid of doing anything that might anger Field Marshal Ayub Khan. Is not the Field Marshal already angry ? Has he not torn to pieces all the solemn agreements, including the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Pact that is now dead as mutton ? Has he not done his damnest best to malign and calumnise India ? Then, why this soft-pedalling on our part ? Our greatest misfortune is that our late Prime Minister suffered from a tendency, the tendency to conduct himself like an umpire in a cricket match even in matters where our own interests with a foreign country were involved.

When Pakistan showed her intransigence after partition, this is what Gandhiji said : "If Pakistan persistently refuses to see its proved error and continues to minimise it, the Indian Government would have to go to war against it" (Prayer meeting at Delhi, September 26, 1947). India need not go to war against Pakistan, but then, why is it that our Government cannot take certain elementary steps against Pakistan, except writing fine English prose to her by way of protests ? This is not how a brave nation should function.

Whatever that maybe, in the home front we should see that we do not fall a prey to Pakistan's wily designs. Pakistan, the edge of whose hostility is further sharpened by Chinese encouragement, is dead-set on disrupting our economic life. That is China's intention also. Instead of herself getting directly involved in it, she is employing Pakistan as her agent to do it. What is the *modus operandi* of Pakistan in this matter ? This she is trying to achieve by building up an atmosphere of communal tension and bitterness so as to force out of Pakistan members of the minority communities in their thousands to India. The recent exodus is a pointer to this fact. As a result of it, our nation today is faced with a grave problem of relief and rehabilitation which means a heavy pressure on our economy. Pakistan's intention is not only to disrupt our economy but also to destroy our secular base on which Indian democracy rests. Our economy is already experiencing a strain due to this huge exodus from Pakistan which began on January 18, 1964. Under these

circumstances, the question that naturally arises is : should we play into the hands of Pakistan by building a counter-atmosphere of communal tension in this country ? We must be constantly on the guard to see that it is not allowed to happen, for, that would only help to distort or dissipate our focus on the frontier.

Unfortunately, espionage on behalf of our enemies has struck deep roots in the country. The very fact that one of our Air-force pilots was involved sometime back in the Pakistan High Commission espionage scandal, pinpoints a significant thing. China is interested in ascertaining our Air strength and effectiveness before she decides to strike again, this time possibly jointly with Pakistan. Democracy must not mean giving latitude to anti-national elements ; unfortunately, this is what is happening in our country. The anti-national elements, particularly elements indulging in treasonable activities must be sternly dealt with and crushed. Our country must live ; there can be no wavering on this issue. It is on this account that I once said in Parliament : "If I were the Prime Minister of India, I would have lined up these traitors, our own men, against the ramparts of Delhi and shot them down one by one. There can be no compromise between treason and national freedom." Democracy must not mean leniency and compromise. It must not mean encouragement to treason. The Indian people do not want to be put in shackles again under foreigners.

With an opposition divided into a plethora of parties, some with extra-territorial loyalty and some with loyalty to communalism, and a massive ruling party, divided in its aims and aspirations (right, left and mythical centrist), that is heavy and unwieldy like a python that has already swallowed about a thousand rats, democracy in this country is a lopsided growth. Ours is a top-heavy democracy which unless mended in time has every chance ultimately to topple down. Yet then, if a choice is to be made between democracy and dictatorship of whatever complexion, the Indian people will choose the former and not the latter. True it is that under democratic dispensa-

tion progress is bound to be slow and sluggish, atleast it is not as spectacular as that under dictatorship. Dictatorship is like a massive sea-going vessel fitted with fast-moving propellers, whereas democracy is like a slow-moving raft. While the former has the chance of being wrecked at any moment, the latter is steady even against worst circumstances. What democracy needs is mental alertness and physical speed ; democracy and inertia are not interchangeable things.

To quote Sir Avor : "The opposition is at once the alternative to the Government and a focus of the discontent of the people. Its function is almost as important as that of the Government. If there is no opposition, there is no democracy". The Opposition in India is weak and feeble, because it is divided and dilapidated. Most of the political parties in our country, instead of being "a focus of the discontent of the people", are themselves divided in their ranks. Their main ailment is frustration. To be brief, our political parties on their own part, instead of trying to consolidate the gains of the nationalist movement in the climate of freedom, are engaged in dissipating their energies by internal strife leading to splinter-groups of political associations. This is a sad state of affairs in our country and the most disturbing outcome of this is that the masses find themselves lost at the crossroads of conflicting political ideologies. We must remember that in a democracy a plethora of political parties is a social curse rather than a blessing. To be precise, in a democracy it is always better to have a few political parties, the aims and objects of which the people understand and realise rather than a host of them with undefined ideals and programmes of work. It is always better to have a few strong arms rather than a multitude of feeble fingers.

India is a vast country with a multitude of problems. In the context of it, what she lacks is direction and decision, and above all the national spirit. In the physical sense, the country is one, but in the spiritual, it is a disjointed human mass, contradictory in means and aspirations, approach and attitude.

## INDIA AFTER NEHRU

*M. R. Masani, Bar-at-law, Member of Parliament.*

Our President, Dr. Radhakrishnan, in a broadcast soon after Jawaharlal Nehru passed away, said that 'an epoch in our country's history has come to an end'. The question that we might well consider is whether that is so. This is a time more for questions than for answers, and this is a question one may well ponder.

I am inclined to think that President Radhakrishnan is right. Though we shall not know for some time, it is likely that a page in our national history has come to an end and we are now about to launch on another. Call it the phenomenon of the banyan tree, call it hero worship, call it the cult of personality, the fact remains that Prime Minister Nehru's hold over his own party and over the country was out of the ordinary. When such a personality is removed from the scene, there is bound to be some kind of a break.

Also, it is not only a question of Prime Minister Nehru and India. This is a phenomenon of most of the newly independent countries. In most of the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa, you find one figure emerging on Independence who dominates the scene and who in his lifetime yields to no challenge. There are several people like that still alive in their own countries. There is Sukarno in Indonesia, Nasser in Egypt, Nkrumah in Ghana, Kenyatta in Kenya, Nyerere in Tanganyika, Bourgiba in Tunisia.

It is unlikely this kind of situation would continue after the first leader of the newly freed country is removed from the scene. My own feeling is that we have come to the end of what may be described as the post-independence phase of our national existence, a period that is marked by a hang-over of nationalism and of the fight against a foreign government.

The foreign government may have gone, the substance has gone, but we go on fighting the shadow. Most of the new countries fight the myth of what is called 'neo-colonialism', an invention of communist propaganda for which most of the countries in Africa and many in Asia fall. They keep on feeling insecure. Hence, for instance, the fear of alliances and the consequent policy of 'non-alignment'.

Similarly, there is the hang over of paternalism. In the last seventeen years, we have carried on the old 'Mabap Sarkar' tradition of the British Raj. The "Mabap Sarkar" will provide. The State will do this for us. The State will do that for us. The people sit back and expect the 'Mabap Sarkar', whether it is British or Indian, makes little difference, to do all the things that are necessary. They do not realise that they alone can provide these things for themselves. In that way, the tradition of paternalism has been carried on in this post-Independence period. People say: 'They' don't do this, 'They' should do that, 'They' are corrupt, 'They' are oppressing us. Who is the 'they', as if they are a separate entity? This idea of 'we' and 'they' is no part of a democracy, no part of a really free society. People in the West, in America, England, or West Germany, don't talk about 'they' and 'we'. They only say 'we', including the government amongst themselves. This 'they' is a typical sign of a gulf between the people and the rulers which has no part in a free society. They talk about 'they' in Russia, they talk about 'they' in China. The time has come when we should learn not to blame things on 'them', but to blame ourselves and change things.

These two hangovers of our subjection, nationalism and paternalism, have played a dominating part in the epoch that has now come to an end, and we may legitimately hope to see not so much of them in the era that is now opening.

Looking a little ahead, let us consider what the next ten or fifteen years may bring. What are the likely trends? What are the likely changes that will come over the scene in the next decade or so? These changes are now slowly going to

commence. They will no doubt be accompanied by a refrain that nothing is changing, that nothing shall change, but the changes will be there all the same, perhaps under the surface, perhaps subtle, but there all the same. One wonders whether the passing of the 17th Amendment to the Constitution through Parliament last June will prove to be the last occasion when a kind of debt had to be paid to the past? One would like to think that this kind of obeisance to the dead past will now stop and each policy will be discussed and worked out on its own merits and not because it had been there in the past.

Looking ahead, I would like to venture a few tentative guesses. They are more in the nature of questions than answers.

Will there be any change, for instance, in the relationship between the Centre and the States? Will the character of our government change, so far as the Federal principle is concerned? I should be inclined to think that, in the years to come, the federal principle will get stronger, that States' Rights will come into their own, that State governments, which Rajaji has characterised as glorified municipalities or district boards, will be restored to their proper status. The present subordination of States' Rights has been largely caused by the fact that one Party alone has dominated both the Federal Government and all those at the State level. Once this monopoly is broken and once the Chief Ministers and Governments in some States are of a different colour from that of the government in Delhi, the federal principle can really function. It is altogether likely that this monopoly will be broken in 1967 and we may, in another two or three years, be able to move into a situation whether a State Government may take a stand against the Central Government, assert its constitutional rights, go to the Supreme Court and demand that its rights be respected.

Similary, will there be any change in the functioning of the Cabinet system? Will the relationship between the Prime Minister and his colleagues be the same or will it change? This is another question that arises. In our newspapers,

recently we have found references to something called "collective leadership". This concept comes from Moscow. It came after Stalin's death. It has no place in a democracy. What these people who talk about "collective leadership" really mean is that now there will be Joint Responsibility. Now, joint responsibility is nothing new. It is the essence of Cabinet and parliamentary Government. It is much more likely now that the Prime Minister will, like all democratic Prime Ministers elsewhere, be 'primus inter pares' which, in Latin, means 'the first among equals'. This kind of joint responsibility and Cabinet government is much more likely to develop in the coming months and years than it has done up to now.

Will there be any changes in our international relationships? I do not know. I would like to think that there may be a change towards greater realism in our international relationships and our policies abroad. Even as it was, it could have been said that the Age of Innocence in our foreign policy had come to an end with the invasion of Nefi and the collapse of the policy of *Panchashila*, which turned out to be a 'Himalayan blunder'. So, already the ground had been laid for this change and it would therefore be reasonable to think that this process will now accelerate. We shall, of course, go on talking about 'non-alignment'. As I have said earlier, this change will probably be accompanied by the protest that 'nothing is changing'. But the lessons are slowly being learned.

It was sad and yet amusing to read the rather pathetic confession by the neutralist leader of Laos, General Kong Lae, who had insisted that neutralism was the solution for his country. He said, at long last, according to the *Times of India* of May 24:

'I do not like the Communists, I like neutralism. But the Communists try to destroy the neutralists every time. So from now on I announce that all who are all-against communism I will support and my neutralist forces will join them in the fight.'

A very touching confession. If General Kong Lae had learnt that lesson five years ago, he would have saved his country much suffering and disaster. But better late than never. That is how peoples and nations learn historic lessons.

I would be inclined to think that we shall now attend more to our own business abroad and less towards that of others. More to our own business, which is to guard our neighbourhood, to attend to our own backyard, which we have very badly neglected till now. There is a French saying: 'One must cultivate one's garden'. We have gone here and there all over the globe but we failed to cultivate our own little garden, which consists of our neighbourhood in South and South East Asia. We shall have to pay greater attention to our backyard in South and South East Asia, unless we want to see it occupied by the Chinese Communist bandits.

Above all, I hope we shall attend more to our primary task of restoring some kind of normal relationship with our immediate neighbours in Pakistan. Surely, the wounds of partition must now heal. A whole generation is about to pass. That effort was incomplete when the threads dropped from Jawaharlal Nehru's hands. We may hope that the threads will be picked up and the effort resumed when Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and President Ayub meet shortly.

Then, of course, we have to think of economic affairs and the question arises whether there will be any change there. Will our priorities remain the same or will they be modified, will the emphasis on heavy industrialisation, which has for the last ten years dominated the scene continue or will it be replaced by a more realistic set of priorities, where agriculture takes the first place, as it should, as even Mr. Chou-En-Lai and the Chinese Communists have learnt that it should? Will the bulk of our people who live on the land get a little more attention and be less neglected than they have been doing during the last seventeen years? That is another set of questions that arises in one's mind. I should like to hope that, here again, the beginning of the new thinking is taking place.

I would like to think that, in the coming years, agriculture, will get more attention, the peasant more sympathy. He seemed to be an inferior citizen under the last regime. When we go easy with our plans of gigantism, we shall have less white elephants to feed and we shall have more food left for the people.

Also, in the last year or so, the need for foreign capital was becoming accepted, was beginning to be understood. If this education proceeds a little further, we shall realise how badly we need foreign capital for the country, since we are short in tools but overpopulated, with too many mouths and too many hands. It has been well said that the only incentive to foreign capital is to treat your own capital well. So that, if we really mean what we say, that we want foreign capital to come into the country, then our government's punitive approach to Indian capital will have to change.

Finally, I guess there will be new political alignments in our national life. There will be new coming together and fallings apart, and out of these new alignments there will be a new balance, perhaps a better balance than we have had so far. So far, we have had a lopsided political pattern—one Party too big, other parties too small; or too many political parties.

If Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri's leadership of the Congress Cabinet lasts, we may take it that the Congress Party will follow what may be broadly called a 'Democratic Socialist' policy trimmed I hope of its Marxist overtones and frills. In that case, obviously, there will be no room for Socialists outside the Congress Party and I imagine that my friend, Asoka Mehta may well be proved to be right, in the sense that the correct place for any Democratic Socialist is in the Congress Party. Whether the Communist fellow-travellers, some of whom are today in the Congress Party, have any place there still remains to be seen. Whether they will be edged out and driven into the Communist Party where they really belong is a question which we may well watch in the coming year or two.

Then somebody might ask: What will happen to the Congress Rightists? I have often said that the terms Right and Left have lost all meaning. I do not know who are the Congress Rightists, but let me recall that in the last couple of months, in the heated discussions that have taken place over Kashmir and our relations with Pakistan, the accord between Mr. Morarji Desai and Mr. Krishna Menon has been remarkable and so too the convergence between the Jansangh on the one hand and the Communist Party on the other. So, who are the Rightists and who the Leftists? *The Hindustan Times* of the 4th June 1964 wrote:

'In the five days that preceded Mr. Shastri's election, the Left group, headed by Mr. Krishna Menon and Mr. K. D. Malaviya jumped over fences with remarkable ideological nimbleness. .... The episode, though minor, clearly showed that the distance between the Left and the Right in the Congress may seem large but can be easily bridged by a seat in the Cabinet or on the Planning Commission.'

The likely pattern is going to be that the Congress Party will hold together, with a hard core of about 35% of the electorate. They will undoubtedly drop from 45% in 1962. They must be already below 40, as far as one can make out. You will thus have a third or a little more of the electorate with the Congress Party, with its democratic socialist policy. Then you have about 10% who are wedded to the Communists, who will probably be divided into two parties (already they are practically so). Then there is the Jan Sangh, which at present has got about a 5% vote. It may rise to 6 or 7 but I don't think the ceiling can rise higher, because their sphere is the urban middle class Hindu population in Northern India. Then there is the Swatantra Party, which polled already 9% electorate in 1962, getting over 10 million votes. The remaining 35 or 40% have still to make up their minds.

These changes cannot be automatic. A great deal will depend on what every one does. There is no predetermination in these things. Because one era comes to an end, another

era does not have to point in a particular direction. It may point in one direction or another. So a great deal will depend upon what each one of us does, what the people of India as a whole do. If these trends are to materialise they will have to be supported. People will have to stand up for them. People will have to speak up for them. They will have to educate other people, to whatever party they may belong. This situation provides a great opportunity and a great challenge for those of us who are inclined to work for these changes and these trends.

That brings me to the role of the Party to which I belong. Obviously, the Swatantra Party will remain in opposition. I have no doubt in my mind at all that the Swatantra Party must, more than ever now, play the role of the leading Opposition in the country. But it must be loyal opposition. It must be an opposition of the same kind of people. I have not the least hesitation in recognising a good democrat in my old friend, Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri, and therefore my opposition to his Government will be that of a constitutional opposition like Her Majesty's Opposition in England. After all, we belong to the same stock of the National movement. We fought together for freedom, we went to prison together. Many of us served together in drafting the Constitution of the country. So we have got common roots—common roots of patriotism and common roots of democracy.

We in the Swatantra Party have got the advantage of an incomparably great leader. India's last great pre-Independence statesman is fortunately with us. When Babu Rajendra Prasad died, I remember Rajaji said very sadly : 'Now there are only two of us left—Jawaharlal Nehru and I'. When Jawaharlal died recently, he said with same pathos : 'Eleven years younger than me, eleven times more important for the nation, and eleven hundred times more beloved of the nation, Shri Nehru has suddenly departed from our midst and I remain alive to hear the sad news from Delhi.'

What has Rajaji said on the situation which we are discussing ? He said :

"The election of the new leader is the concern of the Congress Party. I am bothered only about the fact that the Congress Party is ruling and not about who that party puts up as Prime Minister. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri will be a good Premier only to the extent that he develops and maintains respect for Opposition parties as well as his own and independent opinion, and controls his Congress brethren guiding them so as not to allow the oligarchic mentality to grow among them. What has happened over the Seventeenth Amendment (mislabeled the Nineteenth) makes me fear that we have little reason to hope for wisdom or humility or healthy elasticity in the new Government. But things may yet change..... .....

'It remains to be seen whether the new Prime Minister and the new Cabinet will have the courage to effect changes when found necessary. If the new Cabinet hopes that all policies of Nehru are good, it will create difficulties. Loyalty to Nehru does not mean persisting in his policies blindly'.

There we have all the wisdom on the subject.

We Indians are often accused of tending to look backwards, of resting on our oars, on the glories of our past. Perhaps there is some truth in that complaint. Therefore, we should consciously decide that from now on we face the future with its new problems and its new prospectives. It is clear that no nation can move forward if it keeps looking backwards.

## **WILL HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF ?**

*J. B. Kripalani, Member of Parliament,  
ex-President, Indian National Congress.*

For centuries, since the beginning of the historical period of the world, the people of India have suffered and groaned under arbitrary and cruel rule. Sometimes the harshness of this rule was mitigated by rulers like Asoka, the Guptas or Akbar. However, whatever the character of the ruler, absolute in theory, the Government of the country was largely carried on by coteries of courtiers, who belonged to the upper class of his tribe, caste or the religion to which he belonged. It was always a sectional and partisan rule. Therefore even the just and the best intentioned rulers could only slightly mitigate the woes of the common people.

It is also a fact that whatever the character of the rulers, the common people in India never revolted. They suffered in patient silence, till their very humanity was lost. Through immemorial times it has been held in the country that the rulers are divinely ordained, and any protest, not to talk of rebellion, against their misrule would be sacrilegious, *Adharma*. There were no popular upheavals in India. During the last World War, thirty lakhs of people perished inch by inch on the streets of Calcutta of starvation in a few weeks time, though the shops and godowns in the city were full of foodgrains nobody thought of touching them. Through the centuries, the common people in India have learnt the lesson that it is sinful to lay hands upon the property of others, however acquired and whatever one's needs. If this were not so, there will be today no space in Indian jails, as people get there more to eat and more regularly than they ever can hope to get outside. They are also clothed and housed better there. Even the slaves in ancient Rome revolted. So did the peasants in Europe in the middle ages against the tyranny of

the barons and the landlords. In India, unlike in the West, there is no record of popular revolt or uprising against any social or political authority, or a cruel ruler being assassinated by the mob along with his family. There is also no example of despoilation of the goods and the lands of the cruel rich or the oppressive landlords or others of their breed. If ever there was a revolt it was not the rising of the people but of some chieftain, along with the members of his tribe or caste or community. The people in general did not participate. They were generally uninterested spectators. Only their rulers changed. This was so when the British imposed their rule in India. The common people did not rise even in the so called mutiny or, as we call it, the first war of independence against British rule. The revolts of Shivaji and the Sikhs in the south and the north against the decadent Muslim rule, which in its last days of disintegration had developed religious fanaticism and persecution mania, were also initiated not by the common people but by petty chieftains.

The sectional rulers and their kinsmen not only ruled the country but also, through their political power, took possession of most of the land, as did the barons in Europe in the middle ages. Many members of such ruling aristocracy indulged in depredations in the villages, carrying away not only property but the women-folk of the common helpless people. This was the case even during the British Raj. The Zamindars, Taluqdars and other landed proprietors behaved almost in the same way. The White planters who came in the wake of British Rule indulged in like cruelty and rapacity.

All this tyranny was slightly mitigated by the existence in the villages of local self-government of the Panchayats. But even among these, there was no representation of the lowest castes, the untouchables. As a matter of fact they were more or less aristocratic bodies, where the will of the large land owners in the villages generally prevailed. The present day glorification of these Panchayats is generally based upon their ideal and not their actual functioning.

How is it then that through the ages, empires and

kingdoms rose and fell, when the common people remained passive and content with their lowly lot ? For this there were two causes. The one was that the ruling tribes, castes and communities, enjoying power for long stretches of time, indulged in costly and luxurious living. Often they lived lives of dissipation. This progressively undermined the vitality, which had enabled them to establish their dynastic and sectional rule. It led to their decline and decay. Even then, with a passive population, never used to resistance, they could not have been dislodged from power. People unless they revolt, have an infinite capacity to bear patiently injustice and tyranny, losing all traces of manhood. This is what happened to the lower castes in India specially the untouchables. Their humanity got so erased that in living memory, if a high class Hindu was reformed enough to treat them as human beings and was prepared to sit, eat and drink with them, they would not allow it. They would think that it was a great sin to allow a high caste Hindu so to forget his *dharma* as to fraternise with them.

The upper classes and communities could have carried on their cruel domination indefinitely. But nature has an ultimate remedy for all loss of balance and equilibrium. It is continually levelling down the mountains and raising the valleys. This process goes on even in humanity. How did it work in India ? This constitutes the second and the more potent factor in the decline and fall of the rulers and their dynasties. The degenerate members of the ruling cliques fought among themselves for power. Son fought against father, brother against brother, the provinces against the centre and generally there were internal divisions about the spoils of office. We know what happens when robbers fall out among themselves.

Every kingdom and empire in India fell not because of public revolt, not even so much because the health and vigour of the ruling class had been undermined by soft and luxurious living but above all by its own heavy weight of internecine quarrels and wars, for the capture of power. The Rajput

rule was highly cruel and tyrannical for the lower castes. But it fell because of internecine quarrels and wars. The same was the case with Pathan and Mogul rule. The Maratha rule that succeeded the Moghul rule fell to the same disease. The Peshwas and the Rajas fought among themselves destructive fratricidal wars. Some of them sided even with the White foreigners and thus destroyed each other and enslaved the country. The same was the fate of the Sikh rule in the north. Sardar fought against Sardar and allowed the British to annex the Punjab. When political marauders fight among themselves, their fate is sealed.

The Indian soldiers, the Rajputs, the Pathans, the Moghuls, the Marathas, the Sikhs, the Gorkhas etc. as individual fighters, were in no way inferior to the foreign British soldiers. The former had long traditions of fighting. They were not recruited from the lowest strata of society. They were men with families and with the high traditions of their caste or class. Even today it is so. But what they lacked then was proper and united leadership. Therefore they fell an easy prey before the foreigners who were under a united and disciplined leadership. The foreigners' armies were recruited largely from the traditional Indian fighting castes. But under the united leadership provided by the foreigner, they gave as good an account of themselves as any foreign soldier.

Has history taught us any lesson in this respect or is it repeating itself? Have we like the Bourbons in France forgotten nothing and learnt nothing? The British Imperial rule recently yielded place to self-government, swaraj. But is it that in its place we have got good honest and efficient Government? Is it further really the Government of the people? No doubt it has all the forms of democracy. These forms exist today even in communist countries. They too have elections, rival candidates and even parliaments which meet occasionally; yet all these do not make them into democracies. Our swaraj here too has become like a sectional raj. It is Congress Raj. Little that concerns the well-being of the common man seems to be its concern.

Anybody who is not in the Congress or with it, is treated as if he were against it. If he is against the Congress he is against the Government and, consequently, against our late beloved Prime Minister ! How can such a man serve the country or be loyal to it ? The Congress was the country and its late Leader, the Prime Minister, was the Congress. In all important matters his will prevailed. The most crucial decisions were made by him, though apparently by common consent of all Congressmen. All the resolutions at the annual session of the Congress, the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee, on important issues, were either his handi-work or their main lines were dictated by him. They were all passed unanimously. Generally the leader was not known to reveal the working of his mind even to his colleagues in the Central Cabinet. Recently, all the Ministers in the Central Cabinet and the Chief Ministers of various States were induced to place their resignation in his hands. The decision as to who should remain and who should go was also left to him. Some so-called radical member of the A. I. C. C. made this proposal and nobody ventured to raise his voice against it ! The beloved of the people, readily accepted this high responsibility. On his sole judgment and authority he decided to remove six Central Ministers and as many Chief Ministers of the States. Sri Nehru could have removed any of his colleagues in the Central Cabinet and in consultation with the Congress President assigned to them organisational work. Those who resigned however, have not been given any organisational work. Even supervision over the Congress elections was not left to them. In Uttar Pradesh, the Home Minister Sri Nanda was deputed to supervise the controversial Congress elections there. He was too busy to visit the State even once ! The work of coordinating the activities of the U. P. C. C. and the Government there was left to the none-too-busy Defence Minister ! The acceptance of the so-called resignations of the State Chief-Ministers was a fraud practised on democracy. These Ministers were chosen democratically as leaders by the Congress Legislative Parties. They could be

removed by the same bodies. The A. I. C. C. was out of court here. It could not constitutionally authorise the Prime Minister to accept or reject the resignations. This was a clear case of democratic form being used to throttle democracy. Curiously enough the late Prime Minister did not think it proper to accept the resignation of the Punjab Chief Minister, against whom there were innumerable complaints of corruption, mal-administration and high-handedness.

Not only all political power rests with the Congress but most of the money-power rests with it. Its Governments naturally control the revenues of the State. In addition most of the funds subscribed by philanthropic individuals and associations and those given by people for benefits received or to be received at public expense, are at the disposal of the Congress and Congressmen. Some of these funds are spent by organisations, put up by the Congressmen to strengthen their hold on the people, organisations like the Bharat Sewak Samaj, the Sadhu Samaj, etc. Sri Nanda when he conceives of a reform straight way forms a Samiti or Sangh. These organisations get large grants from the Government. Recently, Government building contracts were given to one of them. Some of them keep and render indifferent accounts of the moneys received from public funds, as has been pointed out by the Accounts Committee of the Parliament. All the funds for social and constructive work are spent through Congressmen. Is it any wonder that there is little public money left for the members of other parties to spend even in the fields of social and constructive work? Is it again any wonder that some members of democratic opposition parties, finding that they have no worthwhile public work to do, have joined the Congress? Most of those who have joined recently have no illusions about the capacity of the Congress to establish democratic socialism.

However, the Congress with all its power and resources has not been able to improve the lot of the common man. A former President of the Congress was constrained to admit that under its rule the rich have grown richer and the poor

poorer. Congress rule has been only a little less cruel for the common people than that of the former sectional governments which ruled India. It is true that people are not physically liquidated as under communist and military dictatorships ; it is true that they have generally the freedom to give expression to their views ; it is true that they have the vote ; but there is nothing like good, honest and efficient government, dedicated to the interests of the masses, which, before independence, were considered paramount. And the masses, as ever, bear this heavy yoke patiently. This now is quite clear from Sri Das' report on the doings of the former Chief-Minister of the Punjab. It shows how a corrupt, cruel and arbitrary a Chief Minister can be. He is however not a solitary example. The depredations of those in power elsewhere may differ in quantity but there is no difference in quality. However as in earlier epochs, so now, there is no revolt or rebellion against established authority. Again as usual the ruling party, the Congress, is breaking into pieces by its own heavy weight of internal rivalry for power. It is overridden from top to bottom with groups, cliques, coteries, juntas etc. all ranged against each other in a scramble for advantageous, favourable and secure positions in the Government and the organisation. There are no ideological differences. Every Congressman swears by democratic socialism or whatever be the goal of the Congress for the time being prescribed from on high. In their internecine quarrels Congressmen neither give nor ask for any quarters. They make common cause with the opposition parties, even as their predecessors did with the foreigners. Whatever be the difficulties confronting the nation, whatever be the consequences of their quarrels over the administration and the public life of the country, they go on with them unconcerned. It is thus quite clear that the Congress is riding for a fall unless there is some radical change for the better, and that too quickly.

The decline of individuals and communities is primarily psychological and moral. They are first destroyed in the

totality of the scheme-of-things in the great *Virat*. Their physical destruction comes only when some individual, party or group, pushes them out of the enjoyment of external power. Such an individual or group is merely the outward cause—'Nimitta matram'. The real cause lies in the internal decay and decline, combined with the disunity among those who have ruled or rather misruled the country. The outward cause is merely the instrument in the hands of Higher Powers, which mould the destinies of men and nations. The Congress party seems to have lost its moral hold on the people. It has thus lost its moral justification to rule the people.

From this view-point it would appear that Indian history is repeating itself. There appears to be no person or movement in the Congress that can arrest the internal rot and the downward pull. This is clear from the fact that the best of schemes put forth with the best of intentions at prohibitive cost by the Government come to naught. There was a time when high hopes were built on the Five-Year-Plans. Except the Government, which goes on making ever more costly plans inspite of failure, few today have faith in them. The same is the fate of *Panchayat Raj*, Cooperatives, Community Projects, Education etc. Our foreign policy, which appeared to have commenced with a glorious record of achievements, has so declined that we have few friends left in the world. "None so poor as would do us reverence".

But is it only the Congress Party that will be the victim of this failure? When the old ruling classes fell, it is not only they who were destroyed. They took along with themselves the whole nation. This was the case as we have said when owing to internal decay and disunity the Rajput rule failed. The same was the case when the Pathan and the Moghul rule failed. Again the same fate overtook the nation when the Maratha Empire was destroyed. In the north, the Sikh rule was destroyed because of disunity among the Sardars. With its failure the people were enslaved. Every time the leaders in the Government betrayed the country, they took along with themselves the people, when they fell. It would

appear that we are heading for similar disastrous times, unless the leaders in the ruling party, the Congress, come to their senses and put the country before self, clique or party.

Is there any hope ? There seems to be none, except that the people assert themselves, now that they have got the democratic vote. Will they assert themselves or allow the ruling party to bring about the fall of the country along with itself ? Hope always rises supreme in the human heart. Everything is possible with God !

## ROADS TRAVERSED AND THE ROAD AHEAD

*U. N. Dhebar, ex-President, Indian National Congress.*

New India is seventeen years old. It is facing its first major test. The test appears to be severe on all accounts. But no child has grown in strength, no youth in maturity, no elderly person in wisdom or knowledge without entering the red-hot crucible of crisis: It is a price one has to pay for self-growth. Living through such a crisis with head erect, with courage and faith in one's heart, with clarity in one's mind and with a smile on one's face is an investment before which all other investments pale into insignificance. It gives self-confidence, poise and personality to an individual and a nation as neither wealth nor power can give. All said and done India has to labour through the crisis both national and international. Next few years promise to be a testing time for the patience of the people and the wisdom of the leadership. Both these are expected to be forth-coming in sufficient measure ; hence this look, at sights beyond, with some confidence.

### *Dream and Reality*

It is a story common on our side of the country. It is current over centuries past. It might be universal. It is the story of a Sheikh. One morning the hero of our story, the Sheikh, was going to the market-place with a pitcher of oil on his head. He had set out to sell his oil. In the dreamy loneliness of the desert road, his mind began to float, like the winds sweeping un-trammelled over the desert sands. Fleeting with the wind, the mind of the oil vendor began to slip into the realm of the dream land. He thought of the sweet fragrance of the oil he was carrying. He thought of the bright

beautiful day that lay ahead of him. The soliloquy started. "What a sweet smell. The oil is so fresh. The day is so beautiful. The Bazaar today is bound to be full and the rich traders must have come in plenty from every side of the country. The demand for oil is bound to outstrip the supply and my oil being so fresh is bound to attract the best among the traders. Besides fetching the best possible price, it will earn for me some reputation too and give me a few contacts. With the help of these I shall start a shop. My trade will develop and flourish. I shall make money and prestige. Soon there will be demand for my marriage. I shall secure a beautiful wife who will give me sweet and loving children. They will be fond of me as I will be fond of them. One fine day they will want me to go home early, closing my shop before time. My wife will also join in their loving pressure. Conscious of my importance I shall not yield and will refuse". Unluckily over here, the Sheikh committed a mistake of his life. He forgot that the refusal was only a part of his dream. He was neither in the shop nor with loving children or wife. Forgetting all this, he swung his head to express his patronising 'no'. With the swing of his head came down the pitcher, emptying the sweet fresh oil on his body, on his clothes and the pavement below. With it collapsed the whole structure of his future happiness, his extensive trade and the sweetness of his domestic life.

Life with its hard realities is distinct from dreams. Dreams, we must dream. But every time we should watch that we do not forget the realities of the Indian situation. The story of the sheikh related above has a moral for India. The cross roads at which India stands point to two worlds—a world of dream and another of reality. Both the leadership and the people owe it to themselves and to the country to bear in mind the hard realities of the situation as well as the great potentialities beyond, if the dangers have to be avoided or surmounted and the opportunities are to be utilised to the full.

*Sense of their responsibility is the supreme index of the sovereignty of the people in a democratic frame-work.*

The first thing that the people should realise, as also the leadership, is that India is a democratic country. Providence does come into the picture. There is full play for a really dynamic leadership. . But the issue should not be confused. Forty-five crores of people have to evolve into a Demos if this country is to continue as a democracy, function as a democracy and succeed as a democracy. There is no ruler now on whose ugly head they can over-turn the dustbin of their national failures. Whether these failures emanate from the side of the leadership or the people, the sufferers of the failure will always be the people. This is the solid truth about democracy.

The reality of the Indian situation is that an average Indian has a split personality. Seemingly meek he is an egoist 'par excellence' ; overtly tolerant he can be a sadist ; inclined towards spirituality he can be as bad a materialist as any in the world ; patriotic in his approach he is unbelievably amenable to caste and communal pressures ; bold and brave in his talk he can at times show such a lack of moral courage that one cannot believe he is courageous. One can see at every point a conflict ranging in his mind. This conflict projects over his actions. He seldom appears to be normal, though he reckons himself to be one of the most steady person on the earth. These aberrations in Indian mind have sources in history. These sources require to be unravelled and fully exposed to the cleansing rays of self-analysis and self-introspection. Unless Indian mind becomes clean, happiness for this country will be an elusive objective. It is, therefore, that I began with Sheikh's story. It is to nobody's advantage to imagine things. At the moment a great deal of self-deception is at work, and all at the cost of this beautiful country and its beautiful people.

If the people of India have to be clear about their role and their destiny, there are two imperatives. One is sustenance of the Parliamentary system of Government. The other is

Education. One makes for political advancement, while the other for social advancement. Both are indispensable.

Record of India in the field of Parliamentary form of Government is one for which it could take just pride. The largest democracy in the world has passed through the test of three general elections and is promising to go forward to the future with equal confidence. Elections, it has to be admitted by the worst opponent of India, have been fair, smooth and peaceful. The people have also made their choice with a reasonable degree of poise and detachment. This has confounded the worst critics of India. The Imperialists had spared no pains in painting all kinds of risks to thwart the grant of freedom and prognosticated that 'not a virgin will be left in any household or family in India nor a rupee in its coffer, the moment the British Army vacates and the British Viceroy withdraws.'

A large measure of credit for the success should go to the national leadership. For well-nigh fifty years it had carried on through Press, platform and through local self Government institutions as well as the Pre-Independence legislatures, education of the public mind. Then came on the scene Gandhiji who gave the nation the character. He was assisted by Sardar Patel, who had welded the Congress organisation into one integrated body. Above all there was Jawaharlal Nehru, the democrat of democrats, who could have any day become a dictator but who gave his all to teach the people otherwise. The test is now before us since none of the three is left with us now. The most important difference in the situation that people should understand is that since the demise of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the last of the three, the people have become directly responsible for the sustenance of democracy. That responsibility is theirs now hundred percent.

There are three implications of this understanding on the part of the people. First, they have to realise that danger to democracy is a danger to their own growth. The long long past of India should be a reminder to them that neither

monarchical institutions nor any foreign power can ensure happiness or peace, to them. They have to remember the history that it was Indian feudalism that opened out the gates for foreign Imperialism and that the period of colonial subjugation had been the costliest of our experience in our long history of ten thousand years. It bled us white. It is for the people, therefore, to enshrine in their hearts this salient truth that sustenance and development of the democratic fabric is a guarantee and a condition to their reaching the promised land of peace and happiness. Any harm to that fabric must mean harm to the cause of our peaceful progress. This instrument of popular will is the greatest gift of the country's leadership and more especially of the two mighty personalities—the mother India has produced in the recent past—Gandhiji and Panditji. These two people loved India with the love that has not been shown to it in ages. It was their confirmed advice proceeding from the core of their hearts. Gandhiji and Panditji thought of nothing else in their life-time but about our best interests. We bye-pass their advice at our peril.

The second implication of this understanding is that this slender plant of democracy still requires nursing. I would say, what the late Mr. John Kennedy put it in other context, "Time is not yet to ask what India can give us. This is the time when we should put the question to ourselves as to what India expects from us and what we can give to it" The plant of democracy if it is to take strong roots, will have to be watered with the rich water of individual and group self-abnegation at every turn. There is no fear to the instrument of democracy from any side as from self-seeking and sectarian public men and public bodies.

The third implication is a healthy relationship between the politician and the instrument of State Power. No doubt politicians will work for power. But the purpose of capturing power should be adequately realised. If the purpose is to regulate power in the interest of democracy there can be no quarrel with the politician. Controlling the

seats of power with a view to regulate power is the essence of democracy. Democracy enlists into its service people who have the will and the capacity to use power on the basis of the programmes for people's benefit. But regulation of power is a different thing from distribution of offices. Democracy sinks to the level of hell when the public vie with one another to capture power with a view to distribute the spoils of office or share in it. Power is incidental to Democracy. It is not loot. It is the most indescribable form of abuse of public authority when once in power the authority is used to satisfy the greed and the lust of public-men. All difference between a public-man and a highway-man is then obliterated.

We discussed the three indispensables of the popular Government viz. (i) a conviction that democracy is the only guarantee for people's happiness, (ii) subordination of the individual and group interests and (iii) finally the fact that the instrument of democracy is designed to give an opportunity to the people's representatives to regulate power. It is not conceived as a subterfuge for distributing offices. During the last few years definite trends are noticeable. There is a process of erosion going on on all the three points and the instrument of democracy is itself working under a strain.

This was, however, natural. The most important factor responsible for this state of affairs, in my opinion, is the back place we have given to Education. Democracy without education is worse than any other conceivable system of Government. Constitution set before the country the goal of universal education within ten years for all children between the age of 6 to 14. At the end of twenty years, there will be large groups in the country who will not have received the benefit of any education. These groups will lag behind the rest for another generation. I doubt very much whether the country will cope up with the problem of compulsory primary education by 1980-81.

The greater calamity however is that we are not clear about the direction this education should take. Maulana Azad and Bala Saheb Kher were the only leaders of the nation

who had thought of the education portfolio as being important enough to be handled by them. The leaders both at the Centre and in the States have otherwise given it not even the third or the fourth place. It has ranked after External affairs, Home, Finance, Police and General Administration. Neglect on this front has now started recoiling. We have, however, a national leadership still commanding the confidence of the people. That advantage will be no more available after ten years. Late though, it is better to begin even now than never. Education in a democracy should have a place of primary importance next to food. The very fact that we have not realised it so far shows the road that we have missed.

The question nevertheless remains "What is going to happen to the goal of our Education, its direction and its role?". If I have to utter a truism, I would say that the entire responsibility for giving India a new man rests upon the Educationists of India helped and assisted by the Education Departments of the Government of India and the Governments of the States. They have to fight the battles at the source, over the surface and at the periphery. It is a challenging task as big as feeding the country.

It is here that the cross road, however, is reached and even crossed more markedly, and the steps that are being taken appear to me to be self-defeating. Western countries to whom our educational authorities look for guidance have hardly any worry or anxiety on the score of emotional integration. They have hardly any problem of evolving unity in diversity on the basis of a composite culture. They have hardly any problem of generating a sense of common nationhood. They have not to fight suicidal influences of castes and communalism. They have not to worry about basic minimums for thirty percent of their people. They are not bothered about untouchability, tribal problems or problems of mass scale illiteracy and unemployment. They have the problem of population but not in the context of a situation where the land-man ratio has already crossed the danger mark. These are fundamental divergences between the conditions

obtaining in those countries and the conditions that obtain here. To these can be added the vulgar show of affluence on the part of the rich in a country where one tenth of the people live in stench and squalor, added to this is the snobbery of the intellectuals in a land where the rate of literacy is not even 50 percent and last but not the least a hide-bound administrative structure. These problems also do not obtain in the countries whom we are trying to copy. These differences leave a room for us to think of an approach that takes into account their existence.

We have, however, now the riskiest of a Commission appointed. I would not like to prejudge. But I would like to say that no Government could have played with the destiny of its people in such cavalier a fashion.

Education in India is expected to take into account the history of this country—history in the wider sense of the term covering all aspects of our national life over centuries. That history has left deep impressions on our way of life, our way of thinking, on our character and on our attitudes of life. That history has its bright spots and dark ones. It has worked for strength and weakness. One can dispute with justification the right or competence of any ten or fifteen men and women, however efficient they may be, drawn from a single school of thought to pronounce upon such a vital subject as a nation's way of life. I would dispute the competence even if this Commission were composed of ten or fifteen Gandhians. Education that is to weave a Community with such diverse influences in one composite whole cannot be worked out by one set of people belonging to one set of views however learned they may be.

Apart from history education in India will have at the spiritual level to inform our children about the great beings that built up this society. Education will have to inform them about its rich inheritance as it will have to inform them about the deficiencies in it. Our children should be made to feel proud about the fact that theirs is one of the oldest society on earth and it has something to give to the world even if it

has much to take from the world. Education will have to take into its sweep the treasures of Indian knowledge and wisdom contained in Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagawata and Bbagwad Geeta and the teachings of Buddha, Sankara, Madhava, Vallabha and Guru Granth Saheb. It will have to take into its sweep the treasures of knowledge and wisdom that came to India from outside—treasures to be found in Islam, Christianity and Zorastrianism. It will be a grievous mistake to overlook these. These are the things that have sustained our society and sustains it still and will sustain it hereafter. Indian humanity has always displayed that sense of proportion to distinguish between the elemental urges which distinguish a human being from an animal.

Education in India at the social and cultural level will have to take into account the contradictions both vertical and horizontal that have existed in the country over centuries and still exist to an extent. Those contradictions have taken various forms. Problems of untouchability and Hindu Muslim relation—they are the worse in that respect; so also the problem of isolation of the tribal people from the non-tribals. Education will have to take these into consideration not to perpetuate them but to deal with them. By covering them up under the white, brown or black sheet of science or technology they will not be solved. If any proof is necessary, the attitudes of the South African Whites and the Whites in the Southern States in U.S.A, are proofs that these deeply rooted prejudices cannot be tackled except through education. Education alone can eradicate old prejudices. It has for that purpose to enter into a deep study of these problems, enter upon a close analysis of the causes of prejudice and provide a new vision of man's relationship towards his fellow men, provide a nourishing, vital, rich and noble point of view about the man's special role in relation to man. The central theme in relation to social and cultural values which should inform all that man's actions are not to heap upon him worldly goods or to tickle his sexual tastes, but they are to save him from being a cynic, a misanthrope, a moron, a self-centred being. The values for

which Education should prepare the ground should generate a healthy love for fellow-human beings. Erich Formm defines it thus :—

“Productive love always implies a syndrome of attitudes : that of care, responsibility, respect and knowledge. If I love, I care that is, I am actively concerned with the other person’s growth and happiness. I am not a spectator. I am responsible, that is, I respond to his needs, to those he can express, and more so to those he cannot or does not express. I respect him, that is (according to the original meaning of ‘respicere’) I look at him as he is, objectively and not distorted by my wishes and fears. I know him, I have penetrated through his surface to the core of his being and related myself to him from my core, from the centre, as against the periphery, of my being”.

Education at the political level should induce in the citizens of the country a healthy respect for the Constitution of the country, its parliamentary institutions, its judicial system, its national economic institutions, its political organisations, its local self-Government institutions and for the values of democratic freedom on which all these should stand. It should cultivate habits of study of the other man’s point of view before criticising it or approving it. It should cultivate a habit that what is acceptable should be translated into practice without delay. It should cultivate a spirit of respect for other person’s point of view even though it is opposed to one’s own. Education should ensure strengthening of the spirit of comradeship not only between individuals and individuals but also groups and groups, whether they think on similar lines or on dissimilar lines.

Education in the economic field should be cultivated for furthering social production and social distribution. This is the most risky problem facing the country. We shall deal with it hereafter. But the seeds for social production, social distribution and social exchange have to be sown in the educational stage.

In short, education has to fight battles galore. The reason is plain. It is neglected for centuries. Education has to fight these battles at the source. It has to liquidate the psychology of social humiliation in the Harijans and aloofness in the Adivasis. It has to break through the defensive psychology born of inferiority complex among the Hindus. It has simultaneously to treat the frustrations in the Muslim mind. It has also to treat the inertia of the masses. It has to treat the acquisitiveness of the mercantile community. It has to treat the regional sentiment of the regional groups. It has to treat the opportunism of the politician. It has to treat bigotry and superstition in all fields of life beginning with the religious and ending with the political,—Sarvodaya movement and the Congress not excluded. All this has to be done with the cooperation of the people. It means it has to be done on the basis of faith in the masses.

If integration has to be effective, if democracy, is to survive the education has to be handled by persons who have a deeper knowledge of the Indian mind, its impulses and its potential.

In brief, it has become so imperative if we have to come out of the dreamland of slogans, that the people become conscious of their own responsibilities. This can be done by strengthening the parliamentary institutions and working out a proper system of education. Nothing else is going to help this country. Army and industries have their uses but a strong basis has first of all to be established. Generation of a sense of responsibility in the people is the only way open to us if the concept of people's sovereignty is to be translated into actual practice. For that purpose it is essential to develop a national system of education that enables the people to ward off the strains in their way of thinking which lead to a split in their personalities and disintegration. We have to develop a system of education that enables these people to absolve themselves from the contradictions in their mental fabric and in their social structure which lead to tensions and conflicts. This system of education should integrate the two complexes:

of the experience, maturity and wisdom of the old with the spirit of enterprise and willingness to learn, grow and develop of the new.

*Social Production and Social Distribution : Direction of Socio-Economic Development.*

Somebody has said 'Law is an Ass'. In a sense in the hands of an irrational person it is an ass. When such a person speaks of Justice, as blind he believes that it is blind ; whereas it is blind only in relation to the question of status of the persons who come before it, as it is blind towards normal human frailties. One connotes its detachment, the other its magnanimity. To a rational person both these are highly necessary ingredients of justice. Law simply assists Justice in dealing with the problems before it. It carries the load and burden so that Justice functions. In that sense it is an ass, but an ass without which Justice is unthinkable.

In the same way money is lucre—lucre, however, without which social existence would simply be rendered impossible. Just as the assinine Law is an indispensable vehicle for administering Justice, similarly money sometimes considered detestable—has to circulate to enable the society to carry on its existence. In both the cases Law and Money are incidental. They are not fundamental. The fundamental thing in the one case is Justice and in the other case Social Existence. But they have to be there. Indian society has accepted the need for development. It has accepted that the pace of development should be speeded up to the maximum with the help of science and technology. It has accepted the need for Finance. Finance Ministers do everything in their power to procure finance. They beg. They borrow. They buy. This is an inseparable part of a process of development. But development of the people is the principal thing.

But this process has also reached its critical point. There has been economic development on a substantial scale. None can deny it. But there are problems like growing

disparities, growing shortages of essential supplies, high prices and growing unemployment. These are too apparent to require a restatement. Here also there is so much of wishful thinking, so much of self-deception, so much of day dreaming !

What is development after all ? Does it mean speedier unearthing of minerals, speedier conversion of raw materials, speedier processing, in short speedier production of things ? In the twentieth century with so much human experience behind us, specially in the West, we had better pause and think. Development true, but on what lines ? Copy the West and we have a picture of society which Huxley draws in his book 'The Brave New World Revisited' and Erich Fromm in his book 'Sane Society'. Copy the Communists and you have a picture of society Orwell has drawn in his book '1984'. The question of questions that we have to answer is—"Shall we adapt our economy and technology to human beings or human beings to economy and technology !"

Here is the conundrum of the age. For India it is a question of life and death. One cannot experiment with a sixth of the human race and yet save the human race from the resulting chaos. But on human grounds it is ridiculous to philosophise while misery of an inconceivable character permeates and is increasing because of increasing consciousness. It will be tantamount to acting like spreading salt on an open wound. It burns. It irritates. It hurts. This explains the present temper of the country.

It is necessary therefore to view the development as a humane process and settle the direction. There are two alternatives for us. I can better describe them in the words of the seers of the modern age. This is what Fromm has to say about the Western modes of production :

"Orwell, as well as the other two authors (Huxley and Zamyatin) are only implying that the new form of managerial industrialisation, in which man builds machines which act like men and develops men who

act like machines, is conducive to an era of dehumanisation and complete alienation in which men are transformed into things and become appendices to the process of production and consumption. All the three authors imply that this danger exists not only in Communism of the Russian or the Chinese versions but that it is a danger inherent in the modern mode of production and organisation and relatively independent of the various ideologies."

Endorsing this view Huxley says :

"During the past century the successive advances in technology have been accompanied by corresponding advances in organisation ; complicated machinery has had to be matched by complicated social arrangements, designed to work as smoothly as a new instrument of production. In order to fit into these organisations, individuals have had to de-individualise themselves ; have had to deny their native diversity and conform to standard pattern ; have had to do their best to become automatons".

"An organisation is neither conscious nor alive. Its value is derivative and instrumental. It is not good in itself. It is good to the extent that it promotes the good of the individuals who are parts of the collective whole. To give organisation precedence over persons is to subordinate means to ends. What happens when ends are subordinated to means was clearly demonstrated by Hitler and Stalin. Under their hideous rule personal ends were subordinated to organisational means by a mixture of violence and propaganda, systematic terror and systematic manipulation of minds."

There is some realisation among the Government and the intelligentia that Indian problem requires a different kind of approach. But it is on the surface. All emphasis and effort is directed towards doing the very thing, which Fromm and Huxley warn, is leading to the debasement of human personality in the West.

It is argued that India is far away from the stage at which the Western countries have reached. I do not doubt the sincerity of these people who argue so. But if they think that having walked into the parlour it will be easy to get out at will, it will be pitiable and a wishful thinking. The social approach with a slant towards the West, pattern of national living with a slant towards the West and the economic organisation based on the economic concept of the West must generate the same forces as in the West, which will be difficult to control after they have been reared up.

Cook writes in his book 'Warfare State' about Mr. Eisenhower's broadcast on 17th January, 1961 to the American Nation for the last time as the President of the United States. He writes as follows :

"He stressed that a 'technological revolution' had led to 'sweeping changes in our industrial-military posture.' The very complexity of this revolution had made intricate and costly research essential to national survival. The result had been that 'the free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved, a Government contract becomes virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity.' The President feared 'the prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment,' and he feared, too—in words that suggested to some the haunting spectre of Dr. Edward Teller, the so-called father of the H-bomb and the vociferous advocate of ever more powerful nuclear weapons—that dependence upon Science would lead to a critical situation in which 'public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.'"

This is one road that we can travel. There is also another road which India showed the world and which Gandhiji emphasised. He thought in terms of a spiritual approach to the problems of life. Life, though transitory,

has a purpose. Human personality is not a bag or a bottle of chemical compounds. He has emotions. He has ambitions. He has intelligence. To surrender all these to the claims of the flesh is in no way a sensible thing to do, just as at the other extreme, to forget the physical part is not a sensible thing. Wisdom lies in a balanced approach. That approach is according to Gandhiji an approach based on peace, harmony and prosperity. This is what he said :

"I am convinced that if India is to attain true freedom and through India the world also, then sooner or later the fact must be recognised that people will have to live in villages, not in towns, in huts, not in palaces. Crores of people will never be able to live at peace with each other in towns and palaces. They will then have no recourse but to resort to both violence and untruth."

He has also given his recipe :

"We can realise truth and non-violence only in the simplicity of village life and this simplicity can best be found in the Charkha and all that the Charkha connotes. I must not fear if the world today is going the wrong way. It may be that India too will go that way and like the proverbial moth burn itself eventually in the flame round which it dances more and more fiercely. But it is my bounden duty upto my last breath to try to protect India and through India the entire world from such a doom."

Next he gave the picture of village of his conception :

"You must not imagine that I am envisaging our village life as it is today. The village of my dreams is till in my mind. After all, every man lives in the world of his dreams. My ideal village will contain intelligent human beings. They will not live in dirt and darkness as animals. Men and women will be free and able to hold their own against anyone in the world. There will be neither plague, nor cholera, nor smallpox ; no one will be idle, no one will wallow in

luxury. Everyone will have to contribute his quota of manual labour...It is possible to envisage railways, post and telegraph...and the like..."

Finally he spoke about electric power and tools :

"Provided the character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others."

This was not a plea to taboo large-scale sector altogether. He was himself thinking of Railways and Posts. He had no objection to the use of electric power. These cannot be had without a large-scale sector. Similarly the development of agriculture, animal husbandry and village industries also would need the assistance of modern science and technology. He had no objection to it. His sole concern was the approach—peaceful, nonviolent. His sole concern was the village basis of the economy. He had no desire to lock up India in a prison house of its own making. But he did not want it to be uprooted from its essential base.

Hence there are two roads—a road to dreamland of the West and the road based upon the spiritual, cultural and social content of Indian civilization on Indian roots.

It is true that we have walked a pretty good distance on the first road. Be it so ! But we can continue to walk over it with the same knowledge that we shall in the end be making over our country to dictatorship, whatever its variety may be, or we shall be camp-followers of the West which I do not think they want us to be. We are obliged to the West in the healthy sense of term for whatever they have done. But there are traces in the help we seek and they give which have the germs of ill-health. It will be difficult for the West also to check the process of these germs getting the better of our health. Eisenhower said as follows in the aforesaid broadcast :

"Now this conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the

American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the Federal Government. We recognise the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved ; so is the very structure of our society.

"In the councils of Government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

"We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together".

As I have said before I do not yet take a pessimistic view of the situation. I am hopeful that wisdom of men like Lal Bahadur Shastri and others will still see the red light as brightly as they see the green one. While we have walked a pretty good distance on the first road we can still moderate our pace and direction. That will not endanger the cause of development ; yet will ensure health to it and in course of time work for greater social employment, greater social production, greater equitable distribution and lesser of inflation. It will bridge up the gap between the rich and the poor, the intelligent and the ignorant, between the different social groups and economic groups by raising our politics to a different plane. It will be a plane where human being feels safe in the company of a human being. He does not feel that he is with an oppressor, enemy or opponent. It will be a plane where even those who oppose appear as helpmates and guardsmen of those that are opposed.

So we have seen the two directions of the two roads that meet and bifurcate. We have seen that the answer lies in generating a sense of responsibility among the people based on proper type of education and selecting a path of development based upon peace and truthfulness.

## INDIAN DEMOCRACY AND THE COMING STRUGGLE FOR POWER

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### I. Achievements of Indian Democracy (1950-63)

In 1950 the people of India gave themselves a Constitution that has elicited the admiration of both political scientists and statesmen all over the world. The fathers of the Indian Constitution sought to incorporate in it the principles of three revolutions of the world, the American, the French and the Russian, as also the principles of English freedom. During the thirteen years of its existence, besides maintaining rule of law and fundamental rights, India has to her credit the integration of princely states, expulsion of Portuguese imperialism from India and the integration of the French possessions by agreement. Adherence to religious toleration and secularism, recognition of the rights of minorities, equal rights for women, decentralised democracy and modernisation of Hindu law are also amongst the mentionable achievements of India. India's foreign policy summarised in the principles of peace, non-alignment, coexistence and friendship with all peoples of the world, though misunderstood in certain quarters at one time, has started winning the appreciation of most peace-loving nations of the world. Through economic planning India has abolished landlordism, and promoted community development. She has succeeded in building up a sizeable public sector in the sphere of basic industries. Moreover the State has laid the foundation of social security and is engaged in improving the standards of living of the people. In short, there is in India today a throbbing of new life. The pathetic contentment of the masses stemming from age-old subordination and fed on the exasperating philosophy of *Karma* is at last beginning to be shattered.

## II. India in the eyes of Foreign Observers .

For an objective appraisal of Indian democracy reference might usefully be made to the writings of foreigners who have studied without any bias the progress of our country since Independence. Professor Morris-Jones in his well-known book 'Parliament In India' quotes with approval the remarks of an observer who wrote in the *Manchester Guardian* in 1954 as follows :

"Parliamentary institutions have not had a good time in Asia ..All that is happening in Asia throws a spot light on the Parliament in Delhi as one institution of the kind which is working in an exemplary way.. Pericles said Athens was the school of Hellas, Mr. Nehru without boasting may say that Delhi is the school of Asia".

Nine years have elapsed since then. The position in India does not appear to have altered materially even though at times patches of cloud have seemed to darken the horizon. While democracy has toppled down one after another like houses of cards in nearly all Asian countries except, perhaps, in Japan, Israel and the Phillipines, Indian parliamentary system based on universal suffrage and fundamental rights has continued more or less unimpaired since its foundation in 1950. Thinly veiled dictatorships have sought to masquerade as popular governments under different colourable names, such as 'basic', 'controlled' or 'guided' democracies in a number of Asian countries, while in others unabashed military rule has come to subvert people's freedoms.

It can, perhaps, be claimed that against this gloomy Asian background the modest taper of Indian democracy burns steady and true. Paul H. Appleby, an astute foreign observer who had the invaluable advantage of taking an inside view of Indian democracy at work, stated in his Convocation Address at the University of Nagpur (1952) that India had made "the most significant effort of the century, certainly, and the grandest in dimensions, relative to developed resources, in the world's history".

Writing nine years later Norman D. Palmer a visiting

professor from the U.S.A. thought that free India in the brief period of its existence has succeeded in laying solidly "the foundations for future progress" ('The Indian Political System'). He summarises the achievements of India as follows : "The prospects for democracy in India have been immeasurably heightened by the success of the Indian political experiment during the first decade and a half of independence... The Five Year Plans have speeded the process of economic development, and some aspects of them such as the Community Development Programme and the National Extension Service, have had a direct and appreciable impact on the millions of people. ... There is a new spirit in India, a new feeling of self-confidence, a new awakening". The distinguished British statesman, Lord Attlee has asserted that democracy has made "the most notable advance in India" and that wherever there are democratic movements in Asia and Africa people look to India (Azad Memorial Lecture in 1961).

### III. Hindrances to Progress

The dangers and difficulties that India has had to face have not been inconsiderable. The Kashmir Question, constant border trouble with Pakistan, Chinese aggression on our northern boundaries, involving no less than 48 thousand square miles of Indian territory combined with the vast economic problems including poverty and over-population have threatened to throw Indian democracy into a quandary. We have had to struggle against feudalism and the authoritarian traditions of our country. In recent years linguistic, communal and religious jealousies, casteism, provincialism and separatism have assumed somewhat disturbing proportions. Moral failure of the administration at different levels has also acted as a corroding factor. But Indian parliamentary democracy has somehow managed to absorb these shocks and today it continues to move on a fairly even keel inspite of the fact that it has had to weather occasional squalls in its journey.

Will the Indian ship of State be able to steer clear of the

shoals and reefs and make a steady progress along the course of democratic freedom and social justice? That is a crucial question for the future of our country. For some foreign observers like Chester Bowles India's fight for people's freedom and democracy has not only a national but also an international significance. Chester Bowles believes that "the history of our time will hereafter be written largely in Asia" (Ambassador's Report—1954) and he has the "deep conviction that India was the key to Asia". He seems to think that if India can make a success of democracy she can bring stability to the whole of South-Asia and Africa. If she fails the whole area might fall into chaos.

While any Indian can feel a legitimate pride in the modest but significant record of the nascent democracy in India none can afford to be complacent. Yet there does appear to exist in many quarters an inadequate appreciation of the shortcomings of the Indian polity. Who can deny that vast chunks of people including some leaders of the party in power were suffering from a smug satisfaction with the things as they were until they were knocked out of their slumber by the Chinese invasion and the discovery of the vast disparities of wealth in the country? The need of the hour is constant vigilance and frequent revaluation of our social and political institutions.

Walter Bagehot in his essay on Lord Althorp formulates a principle which perhaps is of universal applicability. He writes : "The characteristic danger of great nations like the Roman or the English which have a long history of continuous creation is that they may at last fail from not comprehending the great institutions they have created". Rome fell because of her failure to arrest international moral decay, to assess properly the external forces gathering strength on her borders ; but above all it was due to her failure to preserve the republican institutions upon which Rome's greatness was built. The dynamism and flexibility of British character together with a constant revaluation by the people of their social and political institutions have saved Britain

from a paralysis that had at least four times supervened in our own long and eventful history.

Hindu civilisation of northern India was overcome by a moral coma in the 11th and the 12th Centuries and Afghan conquest followed. The Afghans again suffered a political and moral decay. Their failure to effect an integration of the diverse people over whom they ruled combined with their inability to comprehend the domestic and external forces of the time brought about the Mughal conquest of India in early 16th Century. Again, jettisoning of Akbar's policy of Hindu-Muslim integration by the last Great Mughal and his failure to understand the nature of the new civilisation that had arisen in Europe was ultimately responsible for ushering in two centuries of foreign rule. Finally, our failure to solve the Hindu-Muslim question at the close of British rule in India led to the disaster of the partition of the country. We failed then because the two communities indulged in petty-fogging bargaining where high purpose and great moral courage were needed. After the attainment of independence India once again showed an woeful inability to assess the nature of the external forces surrounding the country. As a result the Chinese caught us unawares. A lucky conjuncture of international factors, such as world-wide power conflict and Sino-Russian rift, alone saved India from another disaster when the Chinese began to batter our doors.

Will India, inspite of her sizeable achievements at home during the past decade, slide down to decay due to inefficiency and moral failure together with an inability to understand the international forces. Two friendly observers from the U. S. A.—Amaury de Reincourt ('The Soul of India') and Selig S. Harrison ('India : The Most Dangerous Decades') are disposed to take a pessimistic view of things and prognosticate a dark future for Indian democracy and the Indian nation. No less a person than Rajagopalachari ('Our Democracy') seems to hold the same view. In the light of these bleak forecasts a reference to the dangers that are likely to confront

us in, what Selig S. Harrison has called the "most dangerous decades" ahead, would appear to be called for.

Some European and Indian observers like Selig S. Harrison and Rajagopalachari discover in regionalism, in hasty imposition of Hindi as the official language of India, in the displacement of English which has hitherto proved to be a unifying factor in the midst of Indian diversity and in casteism, the future danger to Indian national unity, freedom and democracy. They, however, do not seem to attach as much importance to the inequalities of income and wealth and the consequent bitterness that it has engendered in the country. Politically conscious Indians are to-day sharply divided on the question of planning and the distribution of national income. Speaking to the Congress Forum of Socialist Action on April 4, 1963 the Prime Minister regretted that "the process of development seems to benefit primarily those who take advantage of it because they have more resources. It results to some extent in the wealthy becoming wealthier and the poor remaining where they are." ( Amrita Bazar Patrika 4th April '63 )

The Prime Minister was, indeed, voicing the sentiments of the middle class intelligentsia and the Left political parties. It is noteworthy that with their political awakening the masses are demanding the benefits of independence in terms of standards of living worthy of human beings. On the other hand, there are the Rightist political parties, the organised business community and the conservative elements in the country devoted to free enterprise and generally opposed to State planning. The clash of opinion has assumed definitely recognisable dimensions. Gradually a situation is developing which is likely to culminate in a tremendous struggle for power. The grave danger to Indian democracy and freedom in that event could easily be imagined. In this context an examination of the nature of concentration of wealth and of economic power in the midst of appalling poverty is essential.

#### **IV. The Principles of Economic Reconstruction : Socialistic Pattern of Society**

The social and economic content of the pattern of civilisation that India is striving to realise is enshrined, in the ideal of socialistic pattern of society laid down in the Congress Resolution adopted at Avadi in January, 1955. It stated that "planning should take place with the view to the establishment of a socialistic pattern of society, where the principal means of production are under social ownership and control, production is progressively speeded up and there is equitable distribution of the national wealth". It is note-worthy that at the governmental as well as Planning Commission levels the terms 'socialistic' and 'socialist' came to be used synonymously. It is curious that socialist or socialistic pattern of society was elaborated somewhat differently by the Second Planning Commission (1956). It declared that socialist pattern essentially meant "that the basic criterion for determining the basic lines of advance must not be private profit but social gain ". The Commission's Report accepted by the government emphasises "greater equality in incomes and wealth" and a "progressive reduction of the concentration of incomes, wealth and economic power". Accent is laid on "the raising of living standards, the enlargement of opportunities for all, the promotion of enterprise among the disadvantaged classes and the creation of a sense of partnership among all sections of the community." The report points to the necessity of developing basic and heavy industries in the public sector, but "social ownership and control of the principal means of production" is not emphasised.

#### **V. Socialist Cooperative Commonwealth**

In 1952 at Indoie the Congress formally adopted the attainment of a "socialist cooperative commonwealth" by peaceful and legitimate means as its objective in Part I of its constitution. Accordingly the Third Five Year Plan accentuates progress towards socialism. "Progress towards socialism lies along a number of directions each enhancing the value of the

others. In an underdeveloped country a high rate of economic progress and the development of a large public sector and a cooperative sector are among the principal means for effecting the transition towards socialism" (Third Five Year Plan—1961) The Third Five Year Plan, like the Second aimed at the "rapid expansion of economy without concentration of economic power and growth of monopoly" (Ibid).

## VI. Democratic Socialism

Theoretically the transition from 'socialistic pattern of society' to 'socialist cooperative commonwealth' indicated a qualitative change. But neither the Prime Minister nor the Congress Party recognised this difference. In their elaboration of the latter objective it was hardly distinguished from the former. This impression is strengthened by the Resolution adopted by the All-India Congress Committee at Jaipur in November, 1963. In the Jaipur resolution 'socialistic pattern' of society is explained, in pursuance of the Congress Resolution of 1955, as a system "where the principal means of production are under social ownership or control . and there is equitable distribution of national wealth". As laid down in the industrial policy resolution of the Government of India Jaipur Resolution accentuates the principle "that public sector must grow progressively in large scale industry and trade, particularly in heavy and basic industry as well as trade in essential commodities". Finally Congress ideology is summed up as "democratic socialism based on democracy, dignity of the human individual and social Justice". The social objective of the Congress has thus travelled from 'socialistic or socialist pattern of society' to 'socialist cooperative commonwealth' and from the latter to 'democratic socialism'. Nehru and his party, however, mean one and the same objective by the use of the three different formulas. But what is exactly meant in terms of institutions and programmes remains vague and amorphous. Norman D. Palmer's comment is as follows : "It is a rather nebulous concept, which has never been rigidly defined. It seems to embrace a mild degree of Marxism, a

considerable amount of Gandhism, including emphasis on non-violent means and peaceful change, and ideas of social and economic equalitarianism" ('Indian Political system'). While the social objective of the ruling party has satisfied no other political party Left or Right, it has captured the imagination of the nonparty people in India who play a decisive role in all elections.

### **VII. Result of Planned Development**

Over the first two plan periods (1951-61) while national income is estimated to have increased by 42%, per capita income rose by about 16% only. This great discrepancy is explained by the rapid growth of population (Third Five Year Plan) and our comparative failure to find gainful occupations for the unemployed. It is further estimated that during the Third Plan period national income would increase by 30 per cent and per capita income by 17 per cent, i.e. from Rs. 330 in 1960-61 to about Rs. 385 in 1965-66 at 1960-61 prices. (Ibid) The total economic progress so far achieved is noteworthy. Despite administrative and moral failures the position is not altogether unsatisfactory in as much as during all these years foundations were in the process of being laid for a self-generating economy and 'take off' which might be reached at the end of two more plan periods, provided that another population explosion and war preparations do not upset the apple cart.

### **VIII. Distribution of National Income**

While national income has registered an increase the distribution of national income has fallen far short of the objectives. The objective as laid down by the government was as follows : Socialist economy must not only "reduce economic and social disparities...but also ensure that rapid expansion of economy is achieved without concentration of economic power and growth of monopoly." (Ibid) Unfortunately, while securing noticeable advance in the field of development the country has not been able to attain any of the above objectives. In assessing the size of concentration of wealth and economic

power we are faced with dearth of materials. But the few reliable data we possess lead us to the conclusion that the extent of concentration of wealth in the hands of the few is tremendous.

Just before the Republic Day, 1963, the Planning Commission made certain calculations as regards the extent of concentration of wealth. It came to the conclusion that more than 33 per cent of the national income at present goes to 10 per cent of the people who account for 25 per cent of the national consumption. *Economic Review* published by the All-India Congress Committee declared in 1960 that 20 per cent of the people received 50 per cent of the national income. According to another calculation, that of the well-known economist Professor K. N. Raj, 5 per cent of the people appropriated 25 per cent of the national income.

## IX. Concentration of Economic Power

Concentration of economic power in the field of industry is colossal. Sri R. K. Nigam and Sri N. C. Chaudhuri in their monograph on *Corporate Sector in India* have studied, on the basis of the available data, the concentration of paid-up capital among joint stock companies in private sector. In 1957-58 the total paid-up capital of all companies amounted to Rs. 1,059.5 crores.

In 1957-58 out of the total of 28,250 joint stock companies as many as 25,000 had a paid-up capital of below Rs. 5 lakhs each and they had between themselves an aggregate paid-up capital of Rs. 161.1 crores. That is to say about 88 p.c. of the companies had 15 p. c. of the total paid-up capital. 126 at the top with paid-up capital of Rs. 1 crore and above each had 355.8 crores of aggregate paid-up capital. In other words 0.4 p.c. of the total number of companies had a total of 33.5 p. c. of the paid-up capital. This is the general picture of concentration of economic power in the field of industry distributed principally over plantation, insurance and banking. The interlocking of management control further worsens the situation.

The concentration of business in private sector leading towards semi-monopolistic control through inter-locking of management has assumed serious dimensions. A study by Sri A. V. Narsu, under the auspices of the Indian Statistical Institute, of multiple directorships held by big business families established that in 1960 ten families in the Eastern zone controlled 619 directorships. This gave an average of nearly 62 directorships per family. Sri R. K. Nigam and Sri N. D. Joshi, Research Officers of the Department of Company Law Administration, Government of India, in their monograph entitled *Pattern of Company Directorships* (1961), argued that in the Western zone "on the countrywide basis the average number of directorships held by a person came to 7.6, in round terms 8 directorship".

The Mahalanobis Committee on the distribution of national income and concentration of economic power has not yet been able to submit its report. Some of its tentative findings, however, were published in the Press. They may be relied upon for drawing conclusions. The Mahalanobis Committee also found that considerable interlocking in the form of common directorships exists between a section of the banks and industrial undertakings. The Committee shows further that the "management control of industries is incredibly more concentrated than ownership control". With comparatively small share holding, individuals and business houses are able to take complete charge of the policies and operation of the companies."

Monopolistic tendencies discernible in one vital industry, viz. banking, may be examined. Between 1949 and 1960 giant banks increased in number from 6 to 14. During the same period the number of small banks decreased from 521 to 258 and their aggregate share in the total deposits fell from 13.2 per cent to 3.6 per cent; whereas the share deposits in the giant banks increased from 52 per cent to 69.6 per cent of the total deposits. It is noteworthy that between 1959 and 1961 the net profits of these giant banks rose from 7.1 crores to 11.0 crores, that is to say by 57 per cent. Sri H. V. R. Iyengar,

a former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, felt disturbed on account of the rise of certain undesirable tendencies in the giant banks. He particularly referred to the undesirable influence exercised on the banking system in India by certain groups or families. He stated his views as follows : "One of the structural features of Indian banking is this concentration of power which, in some cases, is enormous in relation to the capital actually employed. From time to time we come across cases in which a family or group has the controlling interest in a bank and it has become a major task of inspection to prevent the exercise of this interest in undesirable ways" ( The Statesman Sept. 1, 1960 ). In this connection the observations of Sri Krishna Menon at the Jaipur session of the All-India Congress Committee (November 4, 1963) are noteworthy. He was convinced, he said, that "unless the finance operators in the country were touched there was very little chance for the improvements of national economy."

Semi-monopolistic control over banking has exercised a baneful influence on the development of small-scale and middle-sized industries in the country. At the present moment taxation of industrial profits is taking away a large portion of the liquid resources of such industries. Under the developing economy of India small and middle sized industrial concerns have to seek financial accommodation from banks. These industries were drawing their finances from the smaller banks. Reduction of smaller banking units due to the conspiratorial pressure of big banking has cut off the small and middle sized industries from the sources of supply of liquid finance. Many are languishing and some have already been eliminated from the field. Elimination of smaller manufacturing concerns has led to the substantial shrinkage of employment opportunities because such industries were by their very nature labour intensive establishments. As in banking so in general insurance, monopolistic tendencies are clearly noticeable. In general insurance 10 companies at the top control 50 per cent of the total capital reserve, 53.5 per cent of the total assets and secure 65 per cent of the total premium income.

Not satisfied with their huge gains some business magnates in different interlocked industries have adopted, on a large scale, questionable business tactics, an infinitesimal part of which was laid bare in the Report of the Vivian Bose Committee. In the case which was under its investigation the total loot amounted to 3.35 crores, tax evasion was of the order of 1 crore 45 lakhs and the loss to the investors reached the colossal figure of Rs. 2.60 crores. Sri. Gulzarilal Nanda who moved the resolution on Democratic Socialism at the Jaipur Session of the AICC in November last remarked that they could not certainly "remain a silent spectator to the mischief caused by the earning of ill-gotten wealth by private individuals" (A. B. Patrika Nov. 5, 1963), Sri. Bejoyananda Patnaik speaking on the same resolution observed that out of "13,000 crores of rupees in circulation today as much as 3,000 crores worth of money came from unaccountable sources." He compared the situation to running "parallel government by private sector people for the purpose of their economic planning, distribution and growth" (Ibid).

#### X The Underprivileged in the Community

While big business is pursuing its activities without mentionable hindrance, the weaker sections of the community have had to suffer from dire economic distress. According to the statistical supplement to the Report of the Second Pay Commission (1959) the real earnings of salaried employees in India have actually registered a fall since 1939. Taking 1939 (100) as the base year the real earnings of salaried classes in 1956 was 97, in 1957 it stood at 95 and in 1958 it fell to 94. The rise in middle-class cost of living index since 1958 unaccompanied by corresponding rise in dearness allowance has worsened the situation in 1963.

Agricultural labourers likewise have not fared any better than the middle classes. Between 1950-51 and 1956-57 the daily wages of male, female and child labour showed a decrease by 13.5 per cent, 15.2 per cent and 32.0 per cent respectively. At the same time consumption expenditure and average debt per household increased by 34 per cent and

87.2 per cent (National Sample Survey, C.S.O.), The economic position of agricultural labourers has further deteriorated due to the rise of prices since 1957.

The real income of factory workers constituting 0.86 per cent of the population registered a slight increase, between 1939 and 1954. Taking 1939 (100) as the base year it was 91.7 in 1949 and 102.7 in 1954. But even this slight gain would appear to have been more than eaten up by the rise of cost of living index of the working class since 1954 (Trend in the Index of Real Earnings of Factory Workers in India—Indian Labour Gazette, Vol XIII, No. 4).

There is a widespread feeling in the country that the weaker sections of the country are poorer today than they used to be in 1939. In Madras, an old woman voter was actually heard to say aloud inside the polling compartment, "In these days you are the King-maker and the Minister-maker. Do grant us more and cheaper rice as in the old days." (Report on the Second General Election in India, 1957, Vol I). The old woman was, perhaps, voicing the sentiments of millions of her countrymen and women.

## XI Burden of Taxation

In India today the economically weaker sections of the community have to bear the greater burden of taxation out of proportion to their economic ability to pay. In 1950-51 direct taxes of the Central Government amounted to Rs. 130 crores and in 1961-62 it increased to 206 crores (Budget figures). The total increase was 76 crores or 59 per cent. Let us now consider the figures for indirect taxes. In 1950-51 the indirect taxes of the Central Government amounted to Rs. 227 crores and in 1961-62 Rs. 562 crores (Budget figures). The increase, therefore, was of the order of Rs. 335 crores or 250 per cent.

Coming to the system of taxation in the States it is noticed that the direct taxes imposed by them amounted to Rs. 132.45 crores in 1951-52 and in 1961-62 it was 242.9 crores (Budget figures). The increase was of the order of 183 per cent. Indirect State taxes in 1951-52 amounted to Rs. 148.60 crores

which increased to Rs. 368.65 crores in 1961-62. The increase of State indirect taxes was in the region of 248 per cent.

In short, Central and State direct taxes increased to the extent of 59 per cent and 183 per cent respectively between the years 1950-51 and 1961-62. As against this, the increases of Central and State indirect taxes were of the order of 250 per cent and 248 per cent respectively between the same years. It is generally recognised that the burden of indirect taxes is ordinarily shifted on to the economically weaker sections of the community. Proportionately therefore, far greater burden of the taxation in India for planning and defence is being borne by the low-income groups. It looks as though we are faced in India today with the old Biblical saying : "Unto every one that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath".

The extent of unemployment is a measure of the distress of the depressed sections of the country. The results of the National Sample Survey relating to the year 1966-57 published in March, 1962 revealed that 6 to 7 per cent of the total labour force in the country are unemployed. On the basis of the figures of employment and unemployment, given in the Third Five Year Plan, it appears that taking into consideration the back-log of the unemployed during the Second Plan period, the number of the unemployed at the end of the Third Plan period would be in the neighbourhood of 12 million.

The tentative findings of the Mahalanobis Committee deserve special attention in connection with the solution of the problems of concentration of wealth. The Committee observes : "The wealth of the largest property owners in the community grows at a faster rate than wealth in general, as the savings of the community are more unevenly distributed than their income. On this basis there would be greater inequality in the distribution of wealth among the population unless deliberate policy measures are adopted to check this tendency." ( The National Herald, Sept. 6, 1961 ). The Committee was of the opinion that "expansion of the public

sector is one of the measures of controlling concentration in the private sector." It points out that though the public sector has expanded substantially over the past decade in many fields, "the overall level is still very small as compared to either the overall economy or the private sector." In this connection it may be mentioned that the public sector represents 8 to 9 per cent of the total national production in India ; in the U.S.A. about 21 per cent, whereas in the U. K. public sector is responsible for nearly 41 per cent of the national production. In fact compared with the private sector the public sector in India is insignificant in size. The tentative findings of the Mahalanobis Committee included also the suggestion that unless the tax system was overhauled, "greater inequality in the distribution of wealth among the general population" was bound to ensue. (*Ibid*).

## XII Coming Struggle For Power

On the 20th of August, 1963 the Home Minister stated in Parliament that the average per capita spending per 30-day month for 60 per cent of the people was Rs. 18.79. According to the Planning Commission Rs. 20 per person per month could ensure the minimum standard of living in India. So it would appear that 60 per cent of the people now subsist at starvation level. If we consider this state of affairs along with the concentration of wealth in the hands of a microscopic minority of our people indicated earlier we are confronted with an intolerable situation. The All-India Congress Committee at its Jaipur session in November last showed an awareness of the danger involved in such a situation. The committee reiterated the same old promise of eliminating "privilege, disparities and exploitation through peaceful means and with the consent of the people while preserving and fostering the democratic methods and values as enshrined in the Constitution of India". Such a promise had also been held out in the past. It would be difficult to believe that the new pledge would come anywhere near fulfilment unless the government were prepared to implement, among other things,

the policy measures contained in the tentative recommendations of the Mahalanabis Committee, viz., large extension of the public sector, prohibition of interlocked management, control and over-hauling of the system of taxation. What is demanded at the moment is a vigorous pursuit of a programme of honest democratic socialism with a view to the elimination of economic disparities and concentration of wealth. There seems to be no other way. The appalling poverty of India, our inability to ensure a national minimum standard of subsistence together with the existing disparities pose a grave danger to Indian democracy.

In course of a recent speech at Ahmedabad the Prime Minister (Nehru) hinted that the masses of the people deprived of the minimum conditions of living "would not wait long". He obviously meant that unless Indian democracy adopted definite measures to remove people's distress and succeeded in achieving substantial results the masses in their impatience might look for the short-cut of violence. The privileged section of the people, he omitted to mention, might as well take to organised violence to safeguard their positions of advantage. In the event of such a violent struggle, democracy would come to be subverted either by leftist or rightist dictatorship. Or, in the alternative, could the issue be settled through the instrumentality of the ballot-box ?

The danger of Rightist dictatorship tending towards fascism appears to be more real. Rajagopalachari the guide and philosopher of the Swatantra Party forecasts that "the nation may be compelled to go through a period of political anarchy and face the risk of fascism, which is Nature's way out of disorder and misrule" ('Our Democracy'). In India monopoly capitalism in the Euro-American sense has not yet arisen. But big business tending to occupy semi-monopolistic position has already emerged. Constituting a powerful social force Indian big business has its allies in the foreign capitalist interests in India who cover quite a considerable and significant sector of Indian economy, viz., plantation, minerals, oil, banking and industrial production. The recent development of party

politics in the country is noteworthy in this connection. The spectacular rise of the Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh to importance in the House of the People and in Gujarat, Rajasthan, U. P., Bihar and Madhya Pradesh as the result of the last General Elections is a portent. These two parties, professedly opposed to planned economy and socialism are the natural allies of big business. The communal organisations, connected as they are with orthodoxy, are the traditional henchmen of all vested interests and hence in the event of a struggle for power the communal parties are sure to make a common cause with the parties of the rich.

It is well-known, inspite of avowals to the contrary, that within the Congress there are two distinct wings, the Rightists or the conservatives and the Leftists or the liberals. The Congress Rightists who are by and large, new arrivals in the organisation attracted by prospects of power and gain have economic affinities with big business and social Reactionaries represented by the communal organisations. It would be no exaggeration to state that big business, Congress Rightists, the Swatantra, Jana Sangh and the communal organisations are tied together by a community of interests and constitute a yet unformed confederacy. In the camp of big business and their allies there is an awareness of the shape of the struggle ahead.

On the other hand, the Leftist political parties including the P.S.P. and C.P.I. and the Left wing of the Congress are marked by a broad agreement in as much as all of them believe in planning and socialism. But within the framework of such broad agreement the differences amongst them are colossal. These parties and the other Leftist groups are separated from one another by psychological and ideological chasms which can hardly be bridged. Therefore, in the foreseeable future a united democratic front of the Left is beyond the range of practical politics. Moreover, the Chinese invasion has left the Communist Party of India somewhat divided and demoralised. They have also lost to a large

extent the confidence of the people outside their party ranks upon whom they used to rely. Again, "for all practical purposes, Lord Attle confessed, after a recent visit to India, that the Indian Socialist Party (meaning the P. S. P.) is dead, Nehru having spiked its guns by committing the Congress and the country to a socialist pattern of society." (Frak Moraes in 'Foreign Affairs', July, '61).

In the event of a struggle for power organised labour, peasantry and middle classes will look for leadership to the political parties which usually control them. Their effectiveness will, therefore, depend upon the effectiveness of the parties concerned. It may, perhaps, be concluded that the Left parties who control the different trade union congress will not be able to organise a united front of peasants, working classes and the middle classes divided as the parties are amongst themselves.

So long as Nehru is on the political stage as an active political force he bids fair to continue to dominate the political scene. On the one hand he will be able to hold together the conservative and the liberal elements within the Congress and on the other to stem the rising tide of Rightist forces. Finally, Nehru's leadership of the Congress will be a guarantee against any significant expansion of the influence of the Leftist parties. But after he retires from the political stage there is bound to ensure a struggle for power. The issue of the struggle will be whether India would accept some form of fascism or socialism both of which, perhaps, would be a marked departure from the ideal of democratic socialism. The internal political situation in India is stable today. The ruling party occupies a dominating position. It is, therefore, unlikely that the struggle for power will overtake India in the very near future. Political storm takes sometime to gather force. But it is certain that India will have to face a struggle.

What is likely to be the character of the coming struggle ? Would it be violent or non-violent ? Or would it begin with a non-violent clash and gradually develop into a violent conflict ? What is likely to be the role, if any, of the different

services of the State in such a conflict ? What will be the outcome of this struggle ? The answers to these questions are in the womb of the future. It is, however, clear that the conservative forces are well organised and well entrenched, armed with the vast economic power that they wield. But the camp of socialism and planning is as divided as ever. If the entire Leftist forces within the Congress and outside, anywhere and in any party in the country, fail to consolidate their strength in a democratic front some form of fascist dictatorship is likely to overcome the Indian democratic system. Fascism appears to be the greatest danger to Indian democracy in the most dangerous decades ahead.

## PICTURE IN 1964 : A REVIEW

### I. Democratic Socialism

The acceptance of the goal of democratic socialism by the Indian National Congress at its open session in January, 1964 is the third stage in the evolution of Congress Socialism. In course of nine years the policy has travelled from Socialistic Pattern of Society ( 1955 ), through Socialist Cooperative Commonwealth ( 1957 ) to Democratic Socialism. The resolution on the subject, however, was hardly an improvement upon the one debated earlier at the Jaipur meeting of the All-India Congress Committee in as much as no flesh and bone in terms of concrete policy was given to the concept and the ideal was allowed to remain as nebulous as ever. Democratic Socialism has a generally accepted connotation. As far as the resolution passed at Bhubaneswar was concerned the Congress gave it a new and slightly different meaning and left it rather vague and inchoate. The philosophy of socialism as such suffered a dilution and the Bhubaneswar brand of democratic socialism came to acquire a theoretical weakness. But relative to the Indian context the strength of the ideal lies in its weakness. Its amorphous character imparts to considerable flexibility and strength. The fact is that Congress

democratic socialism is a new concept of economic policy and like every other Indian policy bears the impress of the multiple personality of Nehru. It is a doctrine of socialist pragmatism. Nehru was too good a liberal to embrace unrestricted State action leading to economic regimentation and at the same time his faith was deeply rooted in the fundamentals of socialism engendered in his mind since his college days in Cambridge. His firm belief in the dignity of man and supreme worth of individual personality did not permit him to accept the traditional path of orthodox socialism bringing in its wake suppression of human freedom and initiative. Yet he felt that socialism was the only instrument for the solution of the age-old problem of Indian poverty. His socialist beliefs were modified and toned down when he was confronted with the backwardness and innate conservatism of the Indian masses. The result was a compromise theoretically unsatisfactory but practically sound and workable. It is noteworthy that the passing away of Nehru has not made any difference so far as the future pursuit of the ideal of democratic socialism is concerned. The Prime Minister in course of a recent interview with the editor of a Bombay weekly made the position of his government quite clear. Asked whether he proposed to continue the policy of socialist action as vigorously as the late Prime Minister Sri Shastri replied : "Of course, I do. We have to move in that direction steadily. In fact I consider our speed at the moment rather slow. We have to go faster and I do hope that the next plan will improve both the speed and direction of our march to socialism".

## II. Crises of Food and Prices

The food crisis of 1964 has thrown down a direct challenge to democratic socialism. Four factors have contributed to the aggravation of the problem : short fall in production, population explosion, increasing consumption by the masses who were partially starved before but are better off now as the result of planned development, hoarding by producers for the prospect of higher prices and finally the anti-social activities

of the trade. The respective responsibilities of the different factors for the resultant crisis has not been accurately appraised. But there is enough evidence, it has been claimed, in possession of reliable authorities to establish that the well-to-do peasant hoarders on the one hand and the profiteers and black-marketeers in the trading community on the other are largely responsible for the serious food crisis. The over-all situation has forced the State to contemplate measures that are socialistic in trend. They include the policy of rationing of food in specified areas, partial procurement and control of whole-sale and retail markets of rice and wheat and levy on rice mills. The establishment of rice mills in the State sector has been decided upon and the nationalisation of existing rice mills has been brought within the purview of State policy. The half-hearted measures actually adopted by the Government will not perhaps solve the problem. They are likely to serve as a palliative which, however, in the existing circumstances are highly welcome.

The crisis is not confined to the food sector alone, the spiralling of prices of all commodities has perilously pushed up the cost of living index. Taking the prices of 1952-53 as the base it appears that the all-India whole-sale price index rose from 82.3 in April 1955 to 158.8 in September, 1964. Between January and September in 1964 alone, whole-sale price index has leapt from 136.2 to 158.8. It is not necessary, not even desirable, that prices should be pegged for all time at a certain level during the plan periods. Planned economy is not stagnant economy, moreover, in planned economy reasonably higher prices constitute a necessary incentive to investment. Besides, in the context of price rise well organised planning would bring in its train commensurate rise of rewards to producers of goods and to people engaged in services. But an unconscionable rise of prices indicates a social malady and demands urgent remedial State action. The intensification of the crisis brought about by the tremendous rise of whole-sale prices due partly to relative short-falls but largely, according to knowledgeable sources, to hoarding and

manipulation of the markets by big business is gradually driving the State towards greater and greater State interference. Frantic appeals by the Prime Minister soon after his accession to office to the manipulators of the whole-sale market have been in vain. Addressing the Annual Meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industries on December 21, 1964 the Prime Minister reiterated that industry and trade "could and should" evolve measures to ensure that its products reached the "ultimate consumer" at fair prices. Big business eager for speculative profits has hitherto refused to play the game. Sri T. T. Krishnamachari is understood to have told Parliament's Informal Consultative Committee on Finance on the 19th of December last that in the context of the existence of a huge amount of black money and behaviour of traders there was no alternative to bringing the whole-sale trade under State control. Retailers could then act as Government's agents. There would be perennial trouble, he continued, unless the key sectors of economy were controlled. The commodity trade was, according to the Finance Minister, particularly vitiated because most of it was transacted in black money. This was, in his view, the main cause of the heavy spurt in prices. Apart from the whole-sale trade he did not specify any sector which he had in mind in this connection. Regarding black money the Prime Minister has declared in Calcutta recently that the Government have been devising measures to trace unaccounted money. In a circular to the All-India Congress Committee, Samjukta Sadachar Samiti has recently asserted that while currency in circulation amounts to Rs. 2500 to Rs. 2600 crores, unaccounted money amounts to about Rs. 3400 crores.

Today the State virtually faces the challenge of well-organised profiteers and black marketeers. If the State fails to take up the challenge the economic and, therefore, political trends are likely to assume an ungovernable character. It is clear now that following on the attempt of the West Bengal Government to control the prices of essential commodities the whole-salers in West Bengal and the rest of India have organised

themselves to foil the policy of the State. They have now mounted a counter offensive cutting off the supplies of essential commodities to West Bengal, such as mustard seed, mustard oil, pulses etc. for which she is dependent on other States. The organised profiteers and black marketeers have planned that if price control could be made to fail in West Bengal its would never be tried elsewhere. Placed in this predicament the Government of West Bengal have hardly received adequate coopreration and sympathy of the other States of India. Will the Government of India be a silent spectator in this struggle between a State Government and the anti-social elements ?

Sri T. T. Krishnamachari's recent statement quoted above indicates Governmental thinking. But there appears to be a great gap between thought and action. Ultimately perhaps the Government may be forced by the manoevrings of unscrupulous businessmen to abandon the policy of non-interference with the hitherto recognised spheres of private sector. The success and continuance of the economic policy resolution of 1948 as revised in 1955 depend on the assumption that the private sector will play the game. It has failed to do so. So if there be a departure from that policy, in the interest of the consumer private sector has to thank itself for it. Vigorous pursuit of socialist policy appears to be the only instrument of dealing with the present organised challenge of whole-sale businessmen.

### III. Population Explosion.

The crisis in food and price fronts has been intensified by the unprecedeted demographic spurt. Fall in death rate from 27.4 per thousand between 1941-1951 to 18 between 1951-61, combined with the large-scale migration of displaced persons from East Pakistan to eastern India, illegal Pakistani infiltration and rise in the expectation of life from 32 years in 1951 to 45 in 1961 have pushed up the growth rate for the ten years of plan period (1951-1961 ) to 21.5 p.c. or a little over 2 per cent per annum. It is noteworthy that birth rate did not

register much of an increase in as much as between 1941-51 it was 39.9 per thousand whereas in 1951-61 it increased to 40.0. Sri Ashoka Mehta has suggested that unless we cut overall population growth to half, the pressure of population is likely to upset the apple cart of planning. Family planning, stoppage of Pakistani infiltrations and expulsion of existing infiltrants are the positive methods. But none of these policies have yet met with any appreciable success.

#### IV. Plan Shortfalls.

The facts revealed by the Third Plan Mid-term Appraisal issued in November, 1963 by the Planning Commission are rather disappointing if not disturbing. They reveal the extent of shortfalls in different directions. In the first half of the Third Five Year Plan national income increased at the rate of 2.5 per cent per annum as against the plan project of about 5 per cent. In 1961-62 and 1962-63 industrial production rose by 6.6 per cent and 8.0 per cent per annum respectively as against the plan anticipation of 11 per cent per annum. Shortfalls in vital products like iron and steel, machine-tools, cement, aluminium and fertilisers account for the deficiency.

The deficiencies in the agricultural field are rather alarming. As against the plan target growth of 5 per cent per annum, in 1961-62 the increase was of the order of 1.2 per cent ; whereas in 1962-63 production registered a decline of 3.3 per cent. Sri Ashoka Mehta has recently declared that the failure in the agricultural sector was really due to the failure of adequate irrigation and electricity facilities which agricultural development needed. It is sad to contemplate that in the fifteenth year of planning agriculture has to depend largely on the gamble of the monsoon. In extenuation it may be mentioned that the problem that we have to confront is as vast as it is complex. The legacy of backwardness left behind by British imperialism is indeed proving to be a terrible handicap. Shortage of fertilisers, administrative failure in their proper and timely distribution, mounting dishonesty of the distributing agencies, non-availability of improved seeds in proper

time, besides dearth of capital are amongst the other factors contributing to the failure in the agricultural front. The estimate of the country's needs of food grains in 1964 at the consumption level of 1960 worked out approximately to 19 million tons or 11 million tons more than the total production. A part of this gap was covered by 6 million tons of imported food. The remaining deficit of 5 million tons appears to have been covered by the bumper winter crop. So the country has just succeeded in tiding over the crisis. If the manipulation of the market by hoarders and profiteers could be effectively stopped, the first half of 1965 would not be a period of scarcity. The allocation of Rs. 4,200 crores for agricultural development during the Fourth Plan period together with the implementation of the Prime Minister's promise at Durgapure Congress (1965) that a new machinery would be devised for six-monthly review and evaluation of the progress achieved, even at the block level might really give a fillip to agricultural progress.

## V. Economic Disparities.

In February 1964 the Mahalanobis Committee on 'Distribution of Income and Levels of Living' published its long delayed report. It confirms fully the earlier conclusions of other economists as regards the vast differences of possessions both in rural and urban sectors of national economy. Between 1953-54 and 1959-60, the Committee holds, the bottom 20 per cent of the rural households did not own any land. In 1953-54 the top 1 per cent of households owned 17 per cent, the top 5 per cent owned 41 per cent and the top 10 per cent of the households were owners of 58 per cent of the ownership holdings. In 1959-60, that is to say, six years later, the proportions did not register much of a change. They were 16 per cent, 40 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. The fact that there was hardly any change in the pattern of ownership holdings between 1953-54 and 1959-63 demonstrates that Estates Acquisition Acts which imposed a ceiling for holdings and Land Reform Acts, wherever enforced, were evaded on a

large scale. To make things worse the poorer households in the countryside have hardly benefited by the Community Development and National Extension Service projects. The resourceful well-to-do households mopped up all the advantages.

Disparities in the possessions of urban land were more glaring. In 1953-54 the top 5 per cent of the urban households were found to be the owners of 52 per cent of the total amount of land possessed by households. The top 20 per cent owned 93 per cent of urban land. The figures showing the distribution of shares reveal that concentration in this sector is even greater. In terms of dividend income the upper 1 per cent of the households appropriate more than 50 per cent of personal wealth in the shape of shares.

The picture in urban and rural sectors that emerges out of the Mahalanobis Committee Report, though deficient in many details, establishes beyond doubt that disparities of possessions in India as a whole are appalling. It is on account of this disturbing phenomenon that Nehru decided on the appointment of the Monopoly Commission whose report is awaited with eagerness in all circles. In view of such disparities of possessions a State believing in democratic socialism has to pursue a policy of extension of the State sector of economy. In this context the proposals for the imposition of a ceiling on urban real property as also the taxation of urban landed interests contemplated by the Indian Finance Minister would appear to be highly welcome.

## VI. Administration.

In a country that has accepted the policy of economic planning with a view to the realisation of democratic socialism, administration has a vital role to play. Administration, particularly plan administration, poses problems of baffling complexities. One of the recognised snags in Indian administration is absence of proper coordination. At the Centre as also in the States the administration of the plans of the different departments suffers from a lack of coordina-

tion. It is not unoften that two departments act at cross purposes, one seeking to foil the other. Moreover there is much room left for coordination between ministerial top or the policy making authority on the one hand and the actual administrative agencies implementing the plan on the other. It has also to be recognised that the extent of coordination between a given Central ministry and the corresponding State ministries leaves much to be desired. Finally, at the State level there might be created advantageously independent Planning Supervision Committees composed of economists, statisticians and members of the legislature to keep an eye on plan progress.

Slackness in work, refusal of files to move, the problem of 'lost files' are some of the other administrative problems. These are all due to the lack of supervision, direction and control. The top secretaries and ultimately the ministers in charge are responsible for them.

It is said that corrupt practices at all administrative levels have assumed the proportions of a flourishing industry in India. Permits, licenses, contracts and the distribution of controlled commodities all of which are unavoidable requisites of planning, have been the principal loopholes through which corruption has managed to enter into the administrative system. The Central and the State Governments have been contending with this evil ever since Independence with indifferent success. In very recent times the Central Home Minister, Sri Gulzarilal Nanda, has launched a vigorous movement for the eradication of corruption and even the high and mighty have not been spared scrutiny and punishment. The constant din that has been kept up regarding corrupt practices has led some to think that administrative corruption is a new phenomenon in India born after Independence. This is entirely wrong. It is common knowledge that British administration in India was honeycombed by this canker. During World War II British administrative corruption reached mountainous heights. The moral failures of the existing administration is a continuation

of what vitiated the previous alien administration. It should be remembered in this connection that India is not the only country in the world where corruption exists. Western democracies are not free from it. Other countries, however, do not make a public exhibition of their administrative corruption. We do so on a large scale and our free press gloats over it without any regard for the effect it might produce on India's prestige abroad. All this is not said in defence of corruption. It is time now that we talk less, advertise less and do a little more to eradicate the evil. Sadachar Samitis are in an experimental stage. Nobody yet knows how actually they will function. An overdose of enthusiasm on their part and unwise pinpricks and bickerings by them might as well paralyse plan administration by demoralising even those who are above suspicion. Black marketeers might conspire to use the machinery of Sadachar Samitis to make honest officials who defy their blandishments the target of their attack, and thus endanger and delay honest administration.

## VII. National Integration

National integration has been left by Nehru as a legacy to the nation. In his life time he was the symbol of national unity. Now that he is no longer with us it devolves on us to work ceaselessly for the realisation of the ideal. The problem has many facets all of which are of equal urgency.

In recent times in Parliament and outside, the extreme advocates of Hindi have made themselves obnoxious to the rest of India by their intolerance. They behaved in a manner that betrayed their unwillingness to honour the parliamentary decision on it—simultaneous retention of English as the alternative official language. Their unreasonable and arrogant attitude reminds one of what Nehru said about them in the Constituent Assembly when the question came to be debated there. Nehru remarked: '.....is your approach going to be a democratic approach or what might be termed an authoritarian approach? I venture to put the question to the enthusiasts for Hindi, because in some of the speeches I

have listened here and elsewhere, there is very much a tone of authoritarianism, very much a tone of Hindi-speaking area being the centre of things in India, the centre of gravity, and others being just the fringes of India'. Hindi 'enthusiasts' have already started to regard the non-Hindi speaking people as second class citizens who ought to be burdened with some disabilities in public services and elsewhere. Moreover the optional use of Hindi as the medium of examination held by the Union Public Service Commission will give the candidates whose mother tongue is Hindi an unfair advantage over the rest of the candidates. It will result in filling the Union Public Services with some men of inferior merit. This is not the way to national integration.

Provincialism is another menace strengthened since Independence by the insidious attempt on the part of some Union Ministers to divert Central development projects and private and defence industries to the States to which the Ministers concerned belong. This tendency has given rise to legitimate dissatisfaction in areas deprived of the advantage of such new projects and industries. Another glaring example of provincialism, though an old one, deserves mention here because it has continued to rankle. The people of Orissa nursed the grievance that Seraikela and Kharswan were merged with Bihar and not with Orissa inspite of the fact that the majority of the people of these areas were Oriya-speaking people. These examples raise a simple question—is the Centre holding the balance even as between the States ?

The pull of narrow provincialism revealed itself in connection with the food policy conference held at New Delhi a few weeks ago. On account of the pressure of some States an integrated food policy in the interest of India as a whole could not be developed. This unfortunate affair attracted the attention of the Congress Parliamentary Party and its executive at its last meeting of 1964 called for 'central initiative to lay down a national policy to be implemented compulsorily by the States'. Statutory rationing of Calcutta and its industrial belt and modified rationing in certain other

parts of West Bengal are bound to be an uphill task in the absence of a coordinated policy for the whole country.

Cruel anti-Hindu pogrom engineered in East Pakistan following on the theft of the sacred relic from Hazrat-Bal Mosque in Kashmir produced a deplorable reaction in Eastern India. The vigorous measures adopted by the State governments re-inforced by Central intervention led to the quelling of the riot within a short period.

The evils of linguism, provincialism and communalism bring home to us with force the necessity of strengthening the Centre and invest it with greater constitutional powers to deal with the cankers that are eating into the vitals of the nation.

### VIII. Kashmir and Nagaland

In domestic politics the weather continues to be gloomy in Kashmir and Nagaland. Presidential action in Kashmir under Chapter XVIII ( Emergency Provisions ) indicates that India has taken a step towards the greater integration of the State with the rest of the country. This measure, however, does not rule out negotiations with Pakistan with a view to the permanent solution of the dispute. Some kind of agreement with Pakistan has to be devised because India cannot afford to fight on two fronts, the Pakistani and the Chinese. The solution of the Kashmir tangle is, therefore, invested with utmost urgency.

Nagaland a full-fledged State within the Indian Union celebrated in 1964 her first peaceful Christmas and New Year in eight years. But the answer to the Nagaland question continues to elude our grasp. There is a feeling in knowledgeable circles that the Naga Peace Mission has largely helped. But at the same time it is thought that some of the statements of the individual members of the mission have resulted in the stiffening of the attitude of underground leadership. The Scottish type of self-government offered by the Government of India might create an opening to the settlement of this intractable problem. It has to be recognised that inspite of

the unkind criticism of detractors, Government of India are seeking an honourable and just solution of the question with commendable patience and determination.

### IX. Foreign Policy

In 1964 India found herself isolated at the Cairo Conference of Non-aligned Powers. Our Prime Minister by dint of his sagacity, moderation and goodness registered a personal triumph. Sardar Swaran Singh who accompanied our Prime Minister also achieved a remarkable personal popularity. Moreover, the Indian entourage took an unquestioned lead in behind-the-scene secretarial functions of the conference. But inspite of it all the only two proposals vital to the national interests of India raised by our Prime Minister at the conference were treated with cold neglect by the rest of the Non-aligned Powers assembled at Cairo. Sri Shastri had proposed that a committee of the conference might be appointed to visit China for the purpose of dissuading her from atomic explosion. Secondly, it was suggested by our Prime Minister that the conference might bring pressure to bear upon China so that she might feel inclined to begin parleys with India on the basis of the Colombo proposals. None of these suggestions secured any favourable response from the Powers assembled at Cairo.

In South and South-East Asia today we have only one steady friend—Malaysia. We might lose even this friend on account of our near ambivalence as regards aggressive Indonesian confrontation. Today all the other States in South and South-East Asia look upoon China with respectful fear and some of them depend on her for political, economic and military assistance. The Asian scene has undergone a magical change since the Chinese invasion. The outstanding feature of the new-set up is a tremendous slump of the political stock of India and a corresponding rise in China's political prestige. In the Arab world generally, and particularly in Egypt, we continue to enjoy a measurable amount of good-will. Japan afraid of China armed to the teeth has an appreciable fund of

good-will for India. India's relations with Nepal, our Himalayan neighbour had suffered a tremendous deterioration after the monarchical coup in that country due to the mishandling of our External Affairs Ministry. As a measure of retaliation Nepal developed close relations with China. After the visit to that country of our President and Sri Shastri relations have considerably improved.

In African countries thanks to powerful Chinese lobbying and the comparative failure of our Foreign Office we have lost heavily. In December last Chou En Lai made two significant declarations in the central People's Political Consultative Conference. He asserted that 90,000 square kilometres of territory south of the MacMohan line belonged to China. He also announced the determination of the Chinese Government not to accept any conditions proposed by the Colombo Powers as regards the withdrawal of China beyond the territories now under her occupation. It is significant that none of the African States in the Non-aligned Conference, not even the Colombo Powers, have raised their voice against this blatant declaration. It shows which way the international wind is blowing.

In the west, Russia has hitherto steadily stood by us in the United Nations through thick and thin. When the Anglo-American bloc sought to corner India in the Security Council in connection with the Kashmir and Goa issues, Russian veto saved us from extremely awkward situations. During the Chinese invasion Britain and the U. S. A. proved to be friends indeed and came forward with massive arms aid. Thanks to our policy of non-alignment we have also continued to receive substantial economic assistance from both the blocs. But a change in Russian attitude seems to be inevitable. Inspite of protestations to the contrary and fervent Indian wishful thinking, fall of Kruschev is bound to bring about in the long run a change of Russian policy towards China to the disadvantage of India.

## **X. Indians Abroad**

Indians abroad have had a tough time since the independence of British colonies in Asia and Africa as also in the continent of America. The problem of the State-less citizens of Ceylon is nearing a complete solution and part of it has already been disposed of. India has had to make the best of a bad bargain, there being no alternative to it. Subsequent to the decision of the Burmese Government as regards the exclusion of non-Burmese in retail and wholesale trade a few lakhs of Indians have had to leave Burma. The question of the payment of monetary compensation to them as also the return of their jewllery, at present in safe custody in Burma, have not yet been settled. Indian traders displaced from Kenya, Uganda, Tanganiyka and Zanzibar, numbering a few hundreds have created for India a new problem. In British Guiana anti-Indian riots causing deaths and serious loss of property are causing grave anxiety. Curiously enough the Government of India have been sharply criticised by some political parties for their failure to protect the legitimate interests of Indians abroad. It is forgotten that the countries concerned have taken action as sovereign States in a matter that happens to be a purely domestic question.

## **XI. Atomic Explosion in China**

The atomic mushroom cloud at Lop Nor has cast a dark shadow over India. It has given rise to a lively debate as to whether India should proceed to manufacture the atom bomb. The anti-atomic school have relied upon moral, political and economic arguments. It has been said that India has always pursued the path of peace and eschewed violence as an instrument of national policy. Gandhi and Nehru were wedded to peace and disarmament and the latter was a pioneer in the total banning of nuclear weapons. In pursuance of this policy India signed the Moscow Partial Nuclear Ban Treaty. It would, therefore, be a breach of faith to go back upon it now. It has also been argued that in the event of Chinese nuclear attack a World War would ensue and other

powers would come to our assistance. Some have spoken of the atomic shield of the Atlantic Powers ; others have relied on the joint atomic defence guarantee of the three great Powers, the U. K, the U. S. S. R. and the U. S. A. Finally, it has been said that the manufacture of the atom bomb would be much too expensive for a poor country like India. It would necessitate the postponement of the planned development of the country which India can hardly afford to do. Hence India should under no circumstances go in for the manufacture of the atom bomb.

The atomic school on the other hand have pointed out with great force that when the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the nation is threatened by a Power armed with atomic weapons moral squeamishness and economic consideration should not be permitted to stand in the way. In such circumstances it is the imperative duty of the Government to do all that is required by the consideration of national safety. If India loses her independence, what remains ? For whom is economic planning meant ? Which comes first—freedom or economic progress ? What is the value of planned development if China enslaves India ? The atomic school have further pointed out that a foreign nuclear umbrella is a doubtful palladium. It is childish to think that the U. S. A., the U. K. or for the matter of that the USSR will expose themselves to the risk of Chinese atomic counter attack for the luxury of affording an atomic umbrella to India. It is further pointed out by the advocates of atomic weapon that the manufacture of the deadly weapon by China has upset the balance of forces in the Afro-Asian continents and the world at large. The international prestige of China has, inspite of lone Indian propaganda and the mild protest of Ghana, augmented infinitely since the explosion at Lop Nor. The explosion has practically blasted open the door of the United Nations for China's entry. Moreover, it is reported that Pakistan has received an assurance from China that the latter would pass on to the former the technological 'know-how' of the atom bomb. Success of Pakistan, an unscrupulous and inveterate enemy

of India, would further endanger Indian freedom. In the circumstances, the atomic school argue, it would be height of folly on the part of India to sit back and hug the phantom of empty peace and spirituality. The issue before the country is whether India would go all out to defend her freedom and national interests or sacrifice them and prefer to indulge in the vapid boast that India is wedded to peace and non-violence. The debate is bound to continue with greater vehemence in the future.

### XII. Passing Away of Nehru

The passing away of Nehru marks the end of an epoch, an epoch of seventeen years of charismatic leadership which India was in need of. The present collective leadership with Sri Lal Bahadur Shastri at its head has given satisfaction at home and abroad. His honesty, simplicity, straight forwardness and goodness of heart together with his experience and a kind of apprenticeship under Nehru have endeared him in all political circles. The way he came to be elected to his great office demonstrated the political wisdom of the Congress High Command, particularly of the sagacious leader, Sri Kamaraj, President of the Congress. It further demonstrated the sense of discipline of the Congress Parliamentary Party.

### XIII. Political Parties

As against the apparent unity of the Congress, the Left parties are like houses divided against themselves. The threefold schism in the Communist Party of India bids fair to continue until Russia makes up her differences with China. The Left wing of the Communist Party, it has been revealed, had begun to function since their Party Congress in Calcutta as the fifth-column of China. It is said, they were recipients of money from foreign countries and were preparing for an armed revolt in order to create an atmosphere of disorder favourable to Chinese invasion.

The large-scale arrests of left Communists have, therefore, received the enthusiastic approval of the people. The Communist Party (left, right or centre) in this context will not be able

to make an impression on Indian politics in foreseeable future. The Samjukta Socialist Party formed by the uneasy merger of the P. S. P. and the Socialist Party are again breaking into two separate parties. Besides there has been and there is likely to be in the future a large scale exodus of socialists into the Congress-fold.

The disunity of the Left parties is a sharp contrast with the unity of Jana Sangh and Swatantra Parties. In recent times these two parties have gained in strength and popularity in the circles of socially powerful vested interests, alarmed as the latter are by the socialistic measures of the Congress. The last general election revealed that Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar were their strongholds (See Appendix). These two Rightist parties gained in strength in the Loka Sabha also. The Swatantra taking advantage of the Communist split has displaced the Communists from the position of leadership in the Loka Sabha Opposition benches.

In social ideology the Jana Sangh and Swatantra are very close to each other. Both are opposed to socialism believing as they do in capitalism. Both have their allies in the ranks of big business and former Rajas and Maharajas. The two parties, therefore, are likely to launch combined action in the future against the socialistic measures of the Congress. During the next decade the Congress will have to face the challenge of Right reaction represented by the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra and their allies, the powerfully entrenched vested interests of India. In no country of the world have the vested interests given up their position of privilege without a struggle. Since democratic socialism seeks to divest them of all privileges and establish an egalitarian social order a struggle for power seems inevitable in India. The believers in democratic socialism, therefore have been watching the future of these two parties not without some anxiety.

It cannot be claimed by the Congress that its policy as regards the food and price problems has met with remarkable success. Moreover it has not yet been able to eradicate

corruption, and planning has not been able to achieve in all fields what it aimed at. There is, therefore, dissatisfaction in the country and criticism is very vocal. Yet the people in general have displayed their confidence in the Congress.

An analysis of the results of the General Election (See Appendix) and of the by-elections will go to establish this simple fact. The net gain for the Congress in by-election to the Loka Sabha and State Assemblies since the 1962 General Election has been eight. The party contested all 21 by-elections to the Lokasabha and won 13 seats against 14 in the General Election. In the by-election to the State Assemblies 60 of its nominees were returned against General Elections figure of 51.

The Congress gained six Lokasabha seats from the opposition—two each from Independents and the Forward Bloc and one each from the socialists and the Janasangh. It lost two seats each to the Swatantra Party and Independents and one each to the P. S. P. the SSP and the D. M. K.

In the by-elections to the State Assemblies it won from the opposition 22 seats—nine from Independents, four each from the Swatantra Party and the C. P. I., two each from the P. S. P and the Janasangh, and one from the Akali Party. It lost to its adversaries 13 seats—six to the P. S. P., three to Independents, two to the C.P.I. and one each to the Janasangh and D. M. K.

Of the total votes cast in 21 Loka Sabha by-election, the Congress polled 50.51% and the Opposition 49.5%, compared with 44.4% and 55.6% respectively in 1962 General Elections. In the 95 State Assembly by-elections the Congress polled 52.9% and the Opposition 47.1%, the General Elections tally being 44.7% and 55.3% respectively.

The figures cited above do not indicate that the Congress has lost its hold on the masses ; nor does it prove that the other parties have gained in popularity since the last election. Judging by the by-election results since 1962 there appears to be no evidences that the Congress would be thrown overboard by the electorate in the coming General Election of 1967.

Inspite of its unity as against the rest of the parties the Congress is being weakened by internal dissensions. In many States faction fight within the Congress has become almost a constant feature. West Bengal, Bombay and Madras are perhaps the few exceptions. Moreover, within the Congress there is a certain section who are tied by community of interests with big business and the industrialists. It is this section that stands in the way of accelerating the pace of democratic socialism. Those within the Congress who are firm believers in democratic socialism, must close their ranks as against the 'Rightists' within the organisation.

The total membership of the Congress Party also is not discouraging by any means. In 1962, the party had about 24 lakh primary members and 57,222 active members. The Party's membership at the end of 1963 increased to  $26\frac{1}{2}$  lakh primary members and 66,730 active members.

The future of the Congress as also of the country will largely depend upon how far the convinced socialists within the Congress succeed in eliminating or neutralising the reactionary elements within it who have no faith in either democracy or socialism. Another task that faces the Congress is to increase its membership further so as to maintain its vital contact with the masses of the people.

## APPENDIX

### GENERAL ELECTIONS AT A GLANCE

#### House of The People

Party	1952	1957	1962
<b>Congress</b>	363	371	354
<b>P. S. P.</b>	21	19	12
(K. M. P. P. etc.)			
<b>Communist</b>	16	27	29
<b>Jana Sangh</b>	3	4	14
<b>Swatantra</b>	—	—	18
<b>Independents etc.</b>	85	73	63

Results re. 5 seats not included

#### Legislative Assemblies

Party	1952	1957	1962
<b>Congress</b>	2,246	1893	1787
<b>P. S. P.</b>	204	195	149
(K. M. P. P. etc.)			
<b>Communist</b>	119	161	153
<b>Jana Sangha</b>	35	46	115
<b>Swatantra</b>	—	—	167
<b>Independents etc.</b>	691	611	484

Results re. 3 not seats included.

In Bihar 50 members of the Assembly belonging to the Swatantra Party have applied for admission to the Congress Party.

## LET US WAKE UP

General K. M. Cariappa (Retd.),  
ex-Commander-in-Chief, Indian Army.

### 1. Introductory

This is not a sermon. It is not a list of 'starry-eyed' ideologies, nor is it casting aspersions at any one. This is just plain speaking by a simple soldier to remind ourselves of our sacred duty to our country to take a frank and free stock of our omissions and commissions, to correct our faults and failings, since we became a free Nation, promptly, and so to safeguard our Independence, to leave for our future generations an economically, industrially, morally and physically prosperous India of INDIANS, as a strong and universally respected democratic country in the comity of Nations.

Our civilisation and our culture are ancient. Our philosophy of truth and non-violence, of the spirit of tolerance, of live and let live, of love and loyalty for mankind, of forget and forgive is glorious. All these are worthy of sacrifices in every form for their preservation. In this service let us remind ourselves of the need for sensible changes in our ways of life to conform to the rapidly changing patterns of society, whilst retaining the fundamentals intact.

In the early stages of our struggle for Independence, the beginning of our efforts emphasised that success or failure depended on our unity or the lack of it. Today our countrymen must face the difficulties which confront us and which will appear in the future, as a united Nation determined not to be distracted in our march forward by considerations of separateness of any kind whatever, separateness of language, or creed or caste or of ones own community.

We got our independence after years of political struggle which was carried out not only by the politicians, but by every one of us too, in our own un-obtrusive humble

ways in whatever walks of life we rendered this service. The man in the street fought for it too. Many got killed and made the supreme sacrifice. Many went to prisons. In response to our insistant rightful demands for Independence, the British rulers gracefully parted with power. We are a very old country historically, but politically we are just on seventeen years old—very young. We have got to get cracking with the building up of our country. We have many, many teething troubles. Here is a glorious and sacred Nation-building adventure in which we of today have the good fortune to be active participants.

## 2. Our Dangers

In these early years of our freedom, we are in danger both internal and external. We are in danger, from moral and intellectual apathy, the mortal enemies of mankind which sap the will and darken the understanding and breed evil dissensions. We are in danger of being a people of 'destructive critics' and NOT co-operative members of the glorious team of Nation-builders. We are in danger of many of us always demanding our pound of flesh, without giving our 'sweat and blood'. Above all, we are in danger of some of us being disloyal to our own soil and to our own heritage, by being loyal to a foreign 'ism', communism, so opposed to our ideology of democracy in its truest form. Unless these are withstood with courage, we shall lack moral strength and moral unity sufficient to save our liberties.

The Chinese unprovoked aggression and the consequent threat to our security must be cleaned up soon, peacefully if possible. If our peaceful efforts fail we must act boldly, physically and soon, if need be with the help of 'brother' countries who have been generously prepared from the outset to give us this help liberally. This is NOT alignment, but if we do not get rid of this threat speedily, the 'cold war' we will be fighting—God only knows for how long—will cost us crores and crores of rupees to build up our defences. This will be at the cost of depriving our millions, the right to have more

amenities of life, food and shelter in particular. All our Nation building projects will be dangerously hampered. We do not want to resort to the use of military force to solve this dispute but by the refusal of China to accede to our request for friendly negotiations, on the lines of the Colombo proposals, we may be compelled to use force to safeguard our National honour and dignity.

The Defence Minister has just given us the happy news that we are building up our Defences in a big way, a 825,000 Army with modern weapons and equipment, a forty-five squadron Air Force, naturally of the latest types of aircraft, and a corresponding build-up of our Navy on modern lines. What with the Territorial Army, the N. C. C. and the National Discipline Scheme, where is the money going to come from, for all these ? I believe our National debt is in the vicinity of Rs. 7,900 crores or so already. Can we really be ever self-sufficient for all our defence needs in the 'nuclear' world of today ? Can we afford to pursue an 'isolationistic' defence policy, when the security and the Independence of our country with her nearly 500 millions are at stake ? How long can we go on borrowing money from outside India, and when can we pay back our National debts ? All these need serious re-thinking.

Our present dangers are a challenge to us, but in meeting challenges of history, people grow in greatness. These dangers demand of all Indians, community of thought and purpose. They demand a restoration of the moral order from which alone true social order can derive.

### 3. Our Duty To Our Country

We are members, one of another dependent even for our daily bread on the work of many. From the community we have our livelihood. To the community we owe a just return of loyalty and honest selfless service in the transactions of life.

Each of us has a duty to defend the community against evil design and aggression, physical or moral, and to preserve

for our children that which was given us. The development of a true united community amongst ourselves and with all people of good-will is the one certain way to peace at home and abroad.

A new and determined effort from all Indians is needed to advance National moral standards. This advance has to come from individuals in their personal and vocational relationships, in and through the lives of families, in and through all our voluntary associations, trade unions, employers and professional groups, the organisations of women, of servicemen and all the societies which our people, particularly the youth—the leaders of tomorrow, have created to express their cultural, social, industrial and economic interests. Moral standards cannot be kept high if those at the top who preach them, live the life of 'Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde'. Our simple millions will respond to any call made on them to make individual and collective sacrifices and work unitedly—if those in authority who make this call, are known to be themselves honest, sincere and selfless, possessing a high standard of moral integrity. Alas, not all leaders are this. People are led up the garden path by some 'vote catchers' promising the 'voters' a land of milk and honey, if they voted for them, with promises they seldom do or can redeem.

There should be an adequate understanding of the nature of law and its necessity as the principle of order in a free society. All of us must take the active and loyal concern in public affairs proper to citizens of a free society, imbued with a high sense of civic duty and discipline. We must examine our conscience and our motives in all our associations with our fellows. If each does his part, the whole community will be renewed. We must think now of the future into which our children go, that we may shape it well and wisely for them.

We must remember those whose labours and sacrifices opened this land to the use of mankind, those who bore and reared the children of our nation, bringing splendour to our country, those who worked with mind and muscle for the

heritage which we, please God, shall, hold and enlarge, for our children and their children and so on to eternity.

We must work ceaselessly in unity to make India strong by having a high standard of national morale, by providing for economic stability, industrial self-sufficiency and physical virility in the people.

It should be our primary duty to see that we as a people live a life of self-respect and dignity. This we can have, if every one of this vast country can have the following essentials :

- a) at least one, if not, two square meals a day,
- b) a roof to sleep under,
- c) clothes to wear,
- d) education and medical facilities,
- e) good inter-communications, roads, transport, railways, air service and postal service, and
- f) social justice and national security.

Given these, our millions will ever be ready to give their best for industrial, scientific and such other development in our country.

#### 4. Sense of Duty

We have got to work not only in terms of so many hours a day or so many days in the week, but in terms of the job in hand and that done well and soon, even though it may mean our having to go without food and rest on occasions. The labour class, whilst justifiably demand for better wages etc. must be made, by the various Labour Unions to put in honest hard work during the specified hours of work a day. Sense of duty must be instilled in every one in our country. We are not really 'duty minded'. We must appreciate our obligations to our employers in the quantum of work we must put in. If in factories and farms wages are forced to be increased without any corresponding increase in the out-turn of work, inflation will inevitably follow and this will be harmful for us all round. This is a matter in which labour unions, can help in a big way. A good labour union is an asset to any business concern.

We can and we will produce much more in our factories, fields and in our offices, if we put in honest eight hours of work a day. Let us emulate the Japanese and the Germans in their superb sense of duty and hard work. Look what they have done since the last war in the magnificent industrial and economic development of their countries by sheer determination and selfless hard work. They are today, two of the most advanced and prosperous Nations in the world. They concentrated on the build-up of their countries after the war and gave second place to matters outside their lands.

### 5. The Privileges of the People in a Democracy

We are a democracy and as such only that political party is voted into power by the people in which the majority have the confidence and the faith to rule the country wisely and well. It behoves such a party to listen to and respect public opinion, so long as such opinion is balanced and is not merely destructively critical. We have a right to speak out our minds frankly and fearlessly, but alas we have no 'public opinion' worth the name. In this context, I quote what our late revered Shri Jawaharlal Nehru said in Delhi on 25th July 1948. He said :

'I think it would be a sad day if people stop criticising and condemning those in authority, because without people strongly criticising and pointing out the errors of their ways, people in authority often go wrong. They get swollen-headed and complacent. They think everything they do is right and everything else is wrong. That is the danger, even though they may be Congressmen. Therefore people in authority have to be checked and kept up to the mark'.

It is either a feeling of 'fear' and/or a feeling of 'insecurity' which makes the people to restrain their observations on 'men and matters'. Fear, because of the 'vindictive' spirit of some politicians in authority to have their 'own back', if some one speaks frankly on their 'omissions' and 'commissions' which may not be palatable to such authority.

Flattery seems to get things done more easily than truth which to some is bitter. Patriotic utterances and suggestions on matters affecting the good of the Nation are not the monopoly of politicians alone. Public opinion, must be assertive and must be expressed freely in public and not confined only to the four walls of a room as seems to be the practice with many of us today.

The party in power must always have health and strong political opposition, without which it will inevitably become 'dictatorial'. It is not good for the progress of any democratic country, to have a one-party rule indefinitely. Should there be no other party to replace it and if it has been too long in power and shows signs of 'staleness', the people then should in the elections, exercise their privilege to have that party 'out' and ask the head of the State to have an 'All Party Government of talents' until one acceptable to them comes up.

## 6. Our Culture

Let us not please live merely on the glories of our past culture and civilisation. I am afraid we do not always show up our culture in many things some of our top people say and do in public. On occasions, I sadly feel, if some of us are really 'civilised'! Let us live the glories and add on more lustre to them. We are today losing our traditional good manners and politeness for which we once enjoyed world-wide respect. We are getting too 'slap-dash' in our ways due to our having been a subject race for well nigh two hundred years and when freedom came we thought we were all 'bosses'. Politeness and good manners cost one, nothing, but they pay high dividends individually and to the Nation. Taken by and large, we are generally idle and want everything done for us by some one else. Most of us live for ourselves and are not always 'purposeful' in our service to our Society. We are selfish. This will not do, if we are to be a great Nation which we can and will be, if we paid more active heed to matters of interest, to INDIA AND INDIANS, and much less thought to our own language, community and personal interest. Many

foreign visitors do not see in us all that they have read about our 'culture, honesty and good manners'—they have been disillusioned. Some of our businessmen have let down the prestige of the country and of their colleagues who are honest, by shady deceitful business-dealings with foreign countries.

It was a sad day, very sad, when these 'Linguistic States' were born because it was a serious blow to the unity of India. We became only 'our-State minded' at the cost of National Unity. We can still rectify this serious blunder we committed—if we, as a people have the courage to act and soon. Let us abolish 'Linguistic States' as such and group them into larger units for administrative economy and convenience, in the interests of the welfare of the common man.

## 7. Education

We must help the less fortunate people of our country who had been denied the benefits of education, and so opportunities for enjoying the fruits of our independence, by intensifying our plans for their education, so as to prepare them to qualify for equal opportunities in Government and other services and not merely 'talk of backward class and forward class'. In this work we must NOT lower our standards of education and administration, merely to give them these opportunities. The craze for rushing through policies of giving more opportunities, without good education, to the so called 'backward and depressd' classes must be curbed. Haste in this respect is neither good for the country, nor for the people concerned. It will be just ruinous. Our standards must be-kept high always.

We must make up our minds on the system of education for our youth which must be 'All-India' and not 'State-wise',—keeping in mind that the main aim of education is to instil in the youth three essential ingredients to fit them for advanced technical and professional education. These are. (a) physical fitness, (b) mental alertness, and (c) moral correctness. The youth must have their minds and thoughts trained, to think for themselves. There is far too little 'thinking' by our

students today. They just 'cram' only notes dictated by their teachers to pass their examinations. They do very little planned wide reading of good books for their education. Examination are necessary but not an overdose of them. When once a firm policy has been decided upon, it must be kept going for ten years at least, without making any material change in it. Political interference in the work of education authorities must be firmly forbidden.

The teaching staff must be hand-picked—only the best should be picked—and paid well. Paid well to prevent them from neglecting their personal attention to the students they teach by having to take up private tuitions to earn more money to keep the 'wolf off the door'. There must be good personal contacts, off class hours, between the teachers and the taught on play grounds, excursions and so on. Parents and Teachers Associations must be general throughout India, as such associations will help keep a watchful eye on the progress of school-going children. There should be in every High School and in every Arts College 'career choosing' cells to advise students on choosing their future careers.

The youth should be kept occupied in healthy sports and recreations off class hours. Excursions and hiking should be encouraged. Our youth generally lack the spirit of adventure. Facilities must be provided for them to see their own States and then the whole of India to see the glories of old and the great things that are being done today. There should be well equipped class rooms, adequate play grounds, and good hostels where economical balanced diet is provided. Every educational institution should have a well-equipped gymnasium and a simple but good 'workshop' where students in their spare time can do some carpentry and such handicraft work. The Scout movement, more than anything else, must be made compulsory throughout. Spiritual education must be made obligatory in all schools—public and private. Without this the youth will grow to acquire only 'material' joy in life and this is not good for our Nation.

Education is spreading. Thousands of new schools and

hundreds of new colleges are coming up. Tens of thousands of our youth of both sexes are rushing into these seats of learning, but there is a dearth of teachers, and equipment in most of them. Not all these education institutions are functioning in full swing and some are empty because of these shortages. It is quite wrong to open new schools and colleges merely to satisfy the demands of the voters, without first getting the necessary staff and equipment for them. It is not the number of buildings alone that we want but it is the number of buildings with the full establishment of teachers and equipment and good books what the Nation needs. Employment and retiring ages for teachers must be raised to find the numbers needed. I have seen many able retired teachers going about unemployed. Selected ex-Junior Commissioned Officers and ex-non-Commissioned Officers of the army could be taken into the education departments in the States and be put through a course in teaching in Elementary schools. This will help a great deal to solve the problem of shortage of teachers. Incidentally, I see more and more of our youth are going to Technical Colleges, and not many to Arts Colleges. There is therefore the possibility of a shortage of professors in Arts Colleges at some future date. This must be guarded against.

### 8. Religion

Let us not please neglect the value of religion as a personal factor to help build national character. It puts into us the essential ingredients required for good citizenship, honesty, truthfulness, sincerity, selflessness, good fellow feeling for mankind, purity of mind and of action. We are a Secular State and so we have many religions in our country. Let us teach our children who are the citizens of tomorrow to respect all religions, as the common faith of them all is the belief in the existence of God and as His children to be good always. Religion is NOT to be used for political or any other similar organisational benefits. It is just personal.

Whilst no communal aspect is ever hinted at the preachers of Islam Christianity, Buddhism and so on, any Hindu who is

an active follower of Hinduism is promptly dubbed by some of us as being 'Communally minded'. This is difficult to understand, when nearly 90% of the people of this vast country are Hindus. Why should they not talk of Hinduism which is such a flexible and broadminded religion ? It's Scriptures contain, as those of Islam, Christianity etc. do too, real gems of wisdom and sagacity which if practised will help us keep our morals on the 'right track'. Bhagwad Gita, the Quran, the Bible, the Granth Saheb and similar Scriptural treasures must be made books of compulsory study in all schools, according to the respective religious denominations of the students. The principles of Hindu Dharma and Karma must be understood in their fullest sense and practised in their fullest form by all Hindus.

It is no crime nor sin to practise the precepts of our religion as long as such practice does not harm the welfare and the interests of those of other religions.

Unless religion is taught in our schools as a character and moral builder, our children will not and cannot grow up to be good citizens of our land, and of the world.

On every school-staff there must be one good religious teacher for each religion taught in that school. It is the duty of the Government of the day to pay official attention to this matter of such National importance.

## 9. Corruption and Communalism

We must be ruthless in action, and not merely in words, in putting down corruption, nepotism, black-marketing, dishonesty and communalism, no matter who commits these crimes. Most deterrent punishment must be given to such people. Hang them if necessary ! One great foreign country does this now. This will soon stop the rot. Both givers and receivers of bribes must be punished most severely. Corruption will NEVER stop by making sentimental, emotional and philosophical appeal to the 'criminals'. They understand only a 'danda' (a stick). Delays in disposal of cases and delays in

granting of licenses are some of the root causes for corruption by bribery.

#### 10. Muslims in India

There are, I think over fifty million Muslims in India, the country with the third largest Muslim population in the world. They have chosen to stay on here voluntarily, after partition in 1947. They are spread out throughout the length and breadth of the country, enjoying the fullest liberties as citizens of India. Many are holding some of the highest offices in our Government in all its departments, in and out of India. Quite a few have their close relatives living in Pakistan, some of whom are holding high offices there too.

We are a secular country. I regard Muslims as much my brothers and sisters as I do people of all the other communities in India. I meet a wide cross-section of them during my frequent travels in the country. I have a large number of good Muslim friends with whom I talk freely on 'men and matters' here. In these talks some have given me, much to my sadness, the impression of their having their feet in 'two boats'—India and Pakistan. Their loyalty seems to be primarily to Pakistan. This is a crime—unpardonable. This is also the impression of a large percentage of non-Muslim intellectuals in India. Here is the root cause for there being a none too happy feeling towards Muslims in India by a large percentage of the majority class. This is understandable.

In this context I make a fervent appeal to all my Muslim brothers and sisters in India to please come out in the open soon and declare at least to their own conscience, whom their loyalty is to—India or Pakistan. If to Pakistan, they must pack up lock-stock-and-barrel and go to Pakistan at once. Such people have no right to have any claim on even one square inch of our sacred soil. If on the other hand, it is to India, and I know there are many Muslims who sincerely and truthfully feel so, they must expose disloyal elements in their community with all speed—and get them to 'Quit' India. Here, then there will be convincing evidence that they are

Indians and so would be accepted as such unreservedly by the majority class. Muslims loyal to India must realise that their brethren in India, who are known to be disloyal to India, are doing greater harm in every respect than the alleged harm done to them by the majority class! The ball is at their feet.

The partition of India came as the result of the demand from the top leaders of the Muslim League who wanted Pakistan. Now that there is Pakistan, I as a soldier just cannot understand why there should be the 'Muslim League' party in India today at all, and yet there is this party still functioning here. To me this seems quite wrong. By all means let there be, and indeed there should be, associations and organisations of Muslims to safeguard their cultural and social interests, but definitely NOT for any political purpose.

So I make this second fervent appeal to Muslims in India to abolish the 'Muslim League' in India immediately and set up Associations for the preservation of Islamic culture etc. as I have suggested earlier on. This action will further prove the sincerity of their loyalty to India.

All this is very very important. Immediate action is required by responsible Muslim leaders in India. Delay in acting will merely accentuate 'Communal disharmony' and this must and can be avoided.

It is all very well to say that it is the duty and the obligation of our Government to look after the safety and security of the minorities in India. I know our Government is fully conscious of this duty and is doing it, but it is physically not possible for any Government to keep an eye on every individual throughout this vast country. It is incidents in individual cases, which flare up to big proportions.

I appeal to my Hindu brothers and sisters to live up to the traditional and historic greatness of the spirit of tolerance of Hindu religion and help put an end to the Communal disharmony that seems to be still lingering on between the two communities. This will be in the best interests of the

five hundred millions in our country. This will give us great National strength. With the ancient and great culture of the two communities the culture of India will then become greater still. However my wishfull thinking is, as soon as India Pakistan relationship improves and the countries become friendly neighbours—all this 'Communal disharmony' will become a thing of the past as mere 'night mares'.

### 11. India-Pakistan Relationship

Trust begets trust, hate begets hate, and love begets love. In the world today there seems to be a good deal of breathing fire by some, to the detriment of the efforts of people who are straining every nerve to get peace, in a truly democratic way. The old saying 'throwing oil on troubled waters' should I feel receive more prominence in our thoughts, in our deeds and in our words today than ever before. The more we breathe 'oil and no fire' the greater the hopes for peace—ever lasting peace.

With these ideas at the back of my mind, I went on my third self-appointed one-man good-will mission to Pakistan early in April. It is my firm conviction that should we of India and Pakistan live up to these ideas in their spirit, it should be possible to see the birth of a new era in our this vast sub-continent which is peopling nearly six hundred million of some of the very finest type of mankind, to resort to friendly negotiations to solve, amicably, problems between our two countries and to become good friendly neighbours. This era will not only bring good to our two countries but it certainly will bring good to democracy and to world peace.

There is today, alas, in some quarters in India and in Pakistan a great deal of hate for each other, mistrust in each other and lack of understanding between each other over some mutual problems, some real and some created by grossly exaggerated press reports. This third visit of mine to Pakistan since 1958 was prompted by my desire to get to know the other side of the picture in regard to two important

factors causing serious misunderstanding and suffering on both sides, between the two countries :—

- a) the Minorities problem and
- b) the Kashmir problem.

Sometime in March, 1964, I requested Field Marshal Mohamad Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan—if I may visit him just for a friendly informal chat on 'men and matters' in our two countries. He very kindly said I may. So I went to Rawalpindi on 13th April, 1964. I had of course first told our Government the main aim of my this visit. I stayed there for two days. I had two frank talks with him on the two issues I have mentioned. He was generous enough to discuss them very frankly with me.

I was happy to find in Field Marshal Ayub Khan, as I had found when I last saw him in February, 1959, a deep measure of real goodwill towards us and an honest desire to be on the friendliest terms with our country. Frequently he expressed his hopes that India and Pakistan could soon become friendly neighbours for our mutual good. Many others I spoke to in Lahore, in Rawalpindi and in Peshawar also gave me the impression of there being a great measure of good will in Pakistan towards India. I assured Field Marshal Ayub Khan and others that there was no less such friendly feeling and good will towards Pakistan in India too, as had been repeatedly expressed in public by our late Prime Minister, and now by our Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. I said there were of course some on both sides who breathe 'fire' and so do harm for our cause.

We both agreed how tragic it was that the minorities on both sides had suffered a great deal in recent days in East Pakistan and in certain parts of India adjoining East Pakistan. We both felt that although these incidents in themselves were despicable and unforgiveable and unfortunate, the press (some) and some militant communal organizations, on both sides, perhaps had fanned the fire of this harted by giving very grossly exaggerated and mischievous reports of communal disharmony in our respective countries in those areas thus:

rousing passions amongst the masses. I suggested that both India and Pakistan should have teams of observers, NOT military observers from foreign countries, but observers from our own respective lands, consisting of retired old men like myself from the Army, from the police, from the civil services, from educational services, and other sources. These should definitely NOT be from politicians or from those holding any office. These teams should be permitted to move about freely amongst the minorities to feel their pulse and to take immediate action on any matter of concern and fear over communal issues. They could help to nip in the bud any communal disturbance which may be brewing up anywhere and so prevent it from snow balling and spreading. The President felt that this was worthy of consideration. I also expressed my strongest disapproval of any suggestion to have a foreign judge to sit over a panel of members of our respective judiciary to look into the cases of the evictees from Assam. I emphasised that such a suggestion would be an infringement on our sovereignty. I appealed that this suggestion should not be raised again.

There appeared to be a feeling in the minds of many important people I talked to in Pakistan, that some persons in India looked upon Pakistan as enemy No. 1 and China who has transgressed our frontiers and who has taken thousands of square miles of our country as enemy No. 2. Every where the names of some such persons were mentioned. I was told because there had been no official muzzling of such talkers in our country the feeling was that they had official backing up for their public utterances and that India was getting military aid from the West mainly to knock out 'Enemy No. 1' first. Hence their protest against Western military aid to us. I pointed out that in India also there was similar feeling that there were some person in Pakistan too who look upon India as 'Enemy No. 1 of Pakistan'. This kind of 'loose-talk' on both sides must be stopped and soon for our mutual good, if we are to remain free and independent countries.

About Kashmir I implored every where, not to talk of a

plebiscite which was unthinkable now, fifteen years after the cease fire. I mentioned about the fifty million Muslims in our country whose security and welfare may be affected should the talk of plebiscite in Kashmir go on continuously, and this might affect the security and welfare of Minorities in Pakistan too, thus leading to serious 'Communal disturbances' in both countries. There were some other aspects of this discussion which would not be proper for me to say in public but which I have conveyed to higher authorities in Delhi.

During my two days stay in Rawalpindi, I had the opportunity of going further up North to Peshawar and right upto the Pakistan Afghan border. I saw the new dam at Warsak, the elaborate irrigation and hydro-electric projects in that area, improvement in communications right up to the Afghan border, of the setting up of a vast University in Peshawar with fine buildings and so on. In Lahore, in Rawalpindi and in Peshawar I saw evidence of progress all round. At Rawalpindi I visited the new township—Islamabad—the construction of which was started just over two years ago, and which had already got half way through. It is going to be a magnificent City when completed.

Seeing all these I felt what tragedy it was that the people of our two countries cannot move freely across our frontiers to meet their friends, indeed there are many, and to see the great progress that is being made in both countries. Let us have frequent visits by batches of college and high school students—between the two countries to sow the seeds of goodwill everywhere—on the cultural, sports and recreational fields.

Our two countries have got to become good friends soon for the sake of nearly 500 millions of our people and the 100 millions of Pakistan and indeed for the nearly 3,200 millions of this world to see that a friendly India and Pakistan will help guarantee the ushering in of peace into the world in a permanent way.

I do hope an opportunity will soon arrive for our Prime

Minister to invite Field Marshal Ayub Khan to India to discuss and settle in a friendly way, our mutual problems. There is no time to waste. Between us we can do it. We do not want some foreign countries to do this for us. To ask others to do this is unbecoming for great nations like India and Pakistan. It is undignifying for both of us to 'wash dirty linen in public'. I found the Field Marshal was quite willing to come to India for these friendly discussions, particularly about Kashmir—if he saw any evidence of 'change of outlook' in India's leaders.

I beg the press in both countries not to fan the fire of communal disharmony, as some papers do, by putting out exaggerated reports emanating from some panicky sufferers, and from militant communal bodies or others loving to fish in our troubled waters. This mutual hatred will take us nowhere. Our armies should face outwards and not each other as they are doing now, costing us crores of rupees at the cost of our economic and industrial progress. India and Pakistan should think of the millions of children, simple innocent children born, in our two countries since Independence to see that we do leave for them a legacy of friendship and goodwill and not one of hatred and bitterness. In all these communal riots and killings who suffers? It is the poor innocent common man—the man in the street—his women and children who get killed, whose humble huts and belongings are burnt and destroyed and NOT any one at high levels—politicians and/or others.

My earnest appeal to the people in India and in Pakistan is to rise above the common level of life and as inheritors of the great traditions of culture and philosophy from our historic past, to get together as friendly neighbours as early as possible. A friendly India and Pakistan will I feel sure, have a great sobering effect on the unsettled international situation in South East Asia and indeed in Asian and African countries because our combined strength will be something formidable. This friendship should help the survival of democracy. This friendship can be a bulwark against the inroad of communism.

into our Commonwealth countries—into other non-communist Asian and to the newly freed African, countries.

Indo-Pak relationship as good friendly neighbours will help us both to provide for increasing industrial, economic and social prosperity to our respective millions. We can help each other, co-operate with each other in very many ways to implement our respective nation-building projects. Exchange of technical experts between our countries, students from India going to Universities in Pakistan and vice-versa—sharing of river waters—would be made possible. We are both possessors of vast spiritual wealth which we can share with countries who are to-day hungering and thirsting for increasing 'Trade' in this 'spiritual' commodity. Our combined contribution to trade in the world in material commodities will, without a shadow of doubt, be gigantic. Together we can offer help in every way to newly born free Asian and African countries to enable them to stabilise their freedom firmly. This would strengthen the Commonwealth of Nations and the United Nations Organizations very greatly. This improved relationship will bring a new era of communal harmony in both countries where the minorities will be accepted freely by the majority as good fellow citizens.

I do hope that in all these continued efforts to get together as friendly neighbours, neither India nor Pakistan will be prevented by mere sentiment or emotions or personal pride of people, to achieve this aim.

## 12. Language and Border Issues

Let us NOT please 'break our heads' over the language nor over the 'Inter-State Border' issues. Please let not Hindi be imposed directly or indirectly on unwilling people. Imposition of Hindi on non-Hindi speakers and possibly making it the language in which to take Public Service Examinations and Tests for all-India jobs will certainly be a very serious handicap to the non-Hindi speakers, who will thereby be denied equal opportunities to get all-India jobs. Let the people themselves, in due course, choose what they want. In

the meantime whilst we must all learn our respective Regional languages and all of us learn elementary Samskrita obligatorily, let us keep English and the Regional languages as the main mediums of Education throughout India. By our neglecting the teaching of English properly to our students in their schools, we have done an irreparable harm to them for their future. Please let us help our fine youth by teaching them English from an early age. Our students must wake up and ask for this. Let us have English as a language in common usage for all-India for all administrative and communication purposes. There is nothing un-patriotic nor un-nationalistic in keeping it so. True and sincere patriotism is in the heart and NOT in the tongue. It is in our heart and NOT in the language we speak. English is becoming more and more of an International language. There is every thing to lose and nothing to gain by our discarding English as some Hindi fanatics want us to do.—in this rapidly progressing world, and with India becoming more and more the hub of the world—culturally and in international politics attracting increasing number of foreign tourists.

Let there be no talk, nor wasting of time and money in settling border issues. In a free India there should be no inter-State borders, but only boundaries for administrative convenience. This crime of 'Border battles' if not stopped immediately, will be most harmful for National integration. These disputes are meaningless. 'Border talks' must be closed down immediately, and 'Buried' for ever, throughout India. Too much public money and valuable time of responsible people are now being wasted on this issue.

### 13. Adult Franchise

Adult franchise, when the majority of our people are illiterate and whose votes have been and are being 'bought' by many unscrupulous persons blessed with money, has been the main cause for many of our avoidable political and social ailments. Most of these 'Voters' know only of their privileges, and practically nothing of their duties. Because of their illiteracy they get carried away by offers of money and

by empty rosy promises of getting their privileges. So, quite a few legislators, most unsuited to be trusted with powers to rule, get into places of authority only with the help of their money, to make more money for themselves and for their relations. This must stop. We want only the best in the country—rich or poor—to be our legislators, and India certainly has large numbers of them. Legislators must have some stake in the land.

The present policy of 'Voting' must change, if we want good administration. I think literacy, not mere knowing the alphabet but ability to read and write his/her language properly, should be the main qualification for eligibility to vote. No one who is not literate should have a vote. As the education of the masses steps up as it is doing now, so will the numbers of voters increase too. If this is considered not practicable—but I think it is—let us have some alternative. Surely we have some thinkers in the country with fresh ideas.

If it is argued that 'Adult Franchise' has come to stay because it is in our Constitution—so were quite a few other privileges and policies too, which have been amended. There should therefore be no objection for yet another amendment—'Amendment of the Adult Franchise' on the lines suggested. Public opinion should press for this.

#### 14. Democracy

The meaning of democracy is quite simple. Democracy is the principle that all citizens have equal political rights in the setting up of their governments, in checking them when they deviate from the accepted principles and proprieties of Governments, in throwing them out if they (the people) feel a change would do the country good. We are a democratic Nation. Many, many countries the world over are attempting to have democratic governments because the people wish to have them as they regard democracy as a valuable institution to have, enabling them to enjoy human rights and privileges, with social justice assured.

We have enshrined in our Constitution, given us by ourselves, our resolve that India shall be a 'Democracy'. On 26th January, 1950, India became a Republic with her own Constitution, the preamble of which announced :

'We the People of India having solemnly resolved to Constitute India into a Sovereign Democratic Republic and to secure to all its citizens, justice, social economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity and to promote among them all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of Nation, do hereby adopt, enact, and give to ourselves this Constitution'.

So in all our plans to build up our country, let us always keep in the sanctity of this national resolve uppermost in our minds, but of late there have been talks of 'democratic socialism' 'socialistic democracy' and all that. Let us please keep our 'democracy' pure and simple. It will then be easier and more practical for us all to participate in this glorious Nation-building adventure with our heart and soul in our service. In fact, true and un-adulterated democracy does give to its people all the privileges and liberties which the 'Socialists' claim only they can give, as such democracy is in fact controlled and disciplined socialism. Loose talks of a 'classless society' in India are meaningless, because with our nearly five hundred million people of so many religions, castes and creeds, with our varied faiths and beliefs in matters of life, with only a tiny percentage of literates inhabiting this vast country with its historic events of regional pride and passion, it is just not possible to get a 'classless society'. It cannot work, but equal opportunities for everyone must be given. I do not like the term 'privileged classes' as it does not fit in the India of today. Individual prosperity must come by the individual's labour and hard work.

It is sickening to hear ad-nauseum here in our ancient land, of rightists and leftists in our Government and in public life. There should be no such categories of our people. We are

all Indianists first and INDIANISTS last. Let people of those countries whose political ideologies are contrary to ours, come and learn from us how we have managed to keep up a healthy and good balance between the 'Public Sector' and the 'Private Sector' with every one happy and contented with production of all our needs in factories and farms, going up and up every day. We can teach them but we must in the reverse order be ever eager to learn new things from countries who are more advanced than us in modern methods of doing things. That we are a democracy was amply demonstrated by the recent splendid unanimous election of our Prime Minister. This smooth management of the transition from the old order into a new one could not have been matched by many other nations. Let us stick to our democracy and that too spiritual democracy to build the India of our dreams.

### 15. Administration

This, alas, today is far from satisfactory as has been often admitted by many in high authority and certainly felt but not freely expressed by the 'toad under the harrow', the people. This has to be put right soon, or else there is likely to be avoidable internal unrest by people losing faith in the Government, thus becoming an easy prey to subversive elements itching to fish in troubled waters to pave the way for the inroad of Communism.

The worst enemies of our administration are the wrong type of 'M. L. A's and 'M. L. C's and the wrong type of members of the ruling party who are letting down the prestige and dignity of their own party by indulging in all shades of nefarious methods to feather their own nests at the expense of the welfare and interests of the people. They are a menace even to their own Ministers. This has to be put right soon by the leaders of the various parties, by throwing such 'rotten members of their team' out of their parties. Policies laid down by the Ministers concerned should be implemented by the executive civil servants under them with no political interference. Politicians—particularly of the Ruling Party

must be strictly forbidden to approach Civil Servants of any grade to get things done for themselves or for their friends and relatives. They should approach only their Party leaders or Ministers. The prestige and the dignity of civil servants must be kept high if they are to have the faith and respect of the public. It is the duty of the Ministers to see that these are not 'undermined' in any way--politically--but then of course, the civil servants must be men of high integrity giving their best in the discharge of their duties. They must work for the people, and must be in close personal contact with them to know of their needs and problems.

There are far too many conferences and seminars attended by far too many people which cost the country a great deal of money and thousands of valuable man-hours. Conferences and Seminars are necessary of course, but they must be kept down to the absolute minimum and only those directly concerned should attend them. Very few people read the lengthy reports that are invariably produced after such conferences and seminars—at great expense to the State. They are often put in 'Cold-Storage'.

Administrative officers in all departments must not be called up too frequently to discuss official matters by those above them, away from their Headquarters. It seriously interferes with, and delays the work of officers at lower levels and the common man suffers. Legal cases in courts go on far too long, wasting many many man-hours by people having to hang around the courts. There are too many adjournments for flimsy reasons. All these must be reduced considerably.

Most deterrent punishment must be given promptly, in proved cases of inefficiency, no matter who it may be. Sack people who are inefficient. There are too many 'square pegs in round holes' generally, in public jobs, resulting from political nepotism and favouritism—wire-pulling and bribery. This is horrible.

Decentralisation, trust in subordinates, reducing the present over-dose of red-tapism, cutting down the numbers of Secretaries, Under-Secretaries, clerical and other staff. to the

barest minimum, more use of personal visits, use of telephones, and less of paper will help to give a new and efficient look to administration.

Orders issued must be implemented and not merely issued to 'cover' one's responsibilities. Frequent personal contacts between superiors and subordinates and the people will produce better results than shoals of letters. Civil servants must spend more time with the people than in their 'office chairs'.

There should be close liaison between all departments of the Government. The practice of each working in its own 'water tight compartment' must be stopped. If the head of each district is authorised to hold a monthly conference of heads of all departments—engineering, forest, education, medical, agricultural, law—who have their offices at this own HQ when each could give a short resume of the work and problems of his own department during the past month, the whole team would be fully in the picture and this will help cooperation and useful work in the interests of the common man. Such conferences will naturally have no executive powers at all. There should also be good liaison between Government departments and local civic authorities like—Municipal presidents—Mayors of Cities and the like to ensure that the implementation of their respective plans for public service and for providing public amenities in urban areas are properly co-ordinated and not disjointed as it often happens today.

## 16. Our Political Parties

Of all the political parties in India, the largest and the best established one is the Congress Party in power today. As I have said earlier on, the party in power must always have strong and healthy opposition. Today there is no single party really big enough to offer this opposition. The smaller parties refuse to join hands to put up a united front in our parliaments at all levels, at least on major issues such as foreign policy and defence. This refusal is not in the best interest of

the people and of the country. The result is the ruling party inevitably becomes dictatorial and the country definitely does not want this dictatorship.

In the press one frequently reads of many 'flutter' amongst themselves in the parties. We have read so much of this in regard to 'groupism' and 'fights' for places even in the Congress Party which brought about the short lived Kamaraj Plan. The cleavage in the Congress is still reported to be pretty deep. If this is true, it is very bad for the country that the ruling party should be so divided. This has got to be cleaned up soon by the loyal party leaders. There should be in all our Cabinets—at the Centre and in the States—complete team work and undivided loyalty to the Captain of the team i. e. to the Prime Minister and to the State Chief-Ministers respectively. Unless this be so, disloyal elements in the team will be doing great harm to the working of the team and so to the Nation.

More efforts and time are being spent by many parties on matters of 'Party interest' than on matters genuinely relating to the welfare and the interest of the people. There is today generally an atmosphere of uncertainty, uneasiness and insecurity in the minds of the masses. The 'national pulse' is a bit jittery. This is definitely harmful for our progress as a democracy.

Strangely enough, I have often heard it said at many places in my travels round the country, by some important and other persons, all NON-MILITARY ones, how much they hoped that there would be an 'Army Rule' to put things right in the country. I do hope things about which the people are unhappy, will soon be put right by the Governments at the Centre and in the States, so as not to give any opportunity for such people to talk in this strain, for, the only Government I would like to have in India is a Government governing in a truly democratic way. The police seem to have lost their 'authority' in many places because of lack of respect for law shown by the man in the street as a result of some politicians encouraging such public

attitude. The 'Communal Monster' seems to be unobtrusively raising its ugly head again. Indiscipline throughout appears to be an easily available 'commodity' because of authorities concerned not enforcing discipline to gain popularity for being 'kind' people—or through sheer inefficiency.

All political parties naturally have their eye on the next General Election and so are preparing for the next 'General Election battle'. Their 'Stables' have to be cleared of undesirables elements, their parties have to be properly organised and strengthened for their battle. All these need time and un-interrupted opportunities. So I do hope whilst offering healthy opposition to the party in power limited though it may be because of only individual party efforts, all parties will get down to tidying up and strengthening their 'teams' for the battles to come in the by-elections and in the General Election in 1967.

### 17. Poverty

We have been talking of removing 'poverty' in India for quite some time, but mere words alone will not do this. Action is needed and there has not been much of it.

What is poverty ? It is, not having the financial purchasing capacity to buy one's normal needs of life, food, clothing and shelter primarily. Purchasing capacity is money. The problem is how to help the poor people to earn money—certainly not by allowing them to beg in the streets, as far too many do now. This is the main crux of the problem. Money can be earned by being some one's employee or by producing something which can be marketed. In the creation of opportunities for this earning, is the action required.

Whatever opportunities are created, who-so-ever by, it must be made quite clear to the earners, that they will have to work hard earnestly, to earn. The increasing number of factories for basic and minor industries to manufacture more and more consumer goods, public work projects like construction of airfields, rail and roads, construction of bridges, and

dams, building public and private offices, and institutions, labour in plantations of all kinds, can absorb tens of thousands of the unemployed poor. This is about employment. Wholesale mechanisation and depending too much on Electric power alone is not good for us at this stage. We must have adequate needs and demands for manual labour in large numbers in all our Nation building projects when we have unlimited man-power of a high order.

Now about earning by production. Newly opened up lands for agriculture can be allotted to the landless poor and only to those who do know something of farming. Such lands could be cultivated individually or on a voluntary cooperative basis. Teaching the poor to be tailors, carpenters, work in cottage industries of a simple kind not needing any expensive technical equipment, stenography, would also help. Co-operative poultry keeping, bee-keeping, cattle, sheep and goat breeding could be encouraged with financial aid and advice. Education of children, their feeding and clothing could be made free or at least on some reduced payments. Shops selling, only to the poor, cheap ready-made clothes, food grains sold at low prices on a Government subsidised principle, free medical care, simple huts put up at public expense with water and light and rented out to them at some nominal rates would all help. Homes for the aged and disabled poor should be organised throughout India. Begging must be stopped by an ordinance. Beggars must be rounded up and made to work.

We have done precious little to persuade the poor class not to 'shine in borrowed plumes' which many are doing now, by living a rich life on borrowed money. They must be taught to cut down expenditure on marriages, festivals and family functions. Yards and yards of cloth is being used by the poor for their pugris and dhoties in which they work in the fields and in the factories. They could be advised to wear some cheap shirts, vests and shorts and cloth caps, according to climatic conditions, when working, thus saving their good clothes and so saving money on clothes. Readymade, this

kind of 'working clothes' should be sold at 'cheap' prices everywhere.

I appeal to all employers (both in the Government and Private concerns) of labourers, ministerial and domestic staff, to pay their poor employees good living wages on their own initiative and not wait for 'strikes' to force their hands to increase wages. Employers should be in close contact with their employees to keep a watch on their domestic troubles owing to increasing cost of living and give them timely help on their own.

In all this service to the poor, the most important help will be to make them literate upto some workable and useful standard, to enable them to be able to read and write well, to understand and put into practice the many useful pamphlets on matters concerning health, family planning, agriculture, cattle breeding and so on that are being issued by the Government.

Here is another class which is not poor yet, but will be so one day if something drastic is not done by the Government to prevent this from happening and that is the 'Middle class', particularly the subordinates and officers in Government services. These are being hard hit by the steadily increasing cost of education of their children in schools and colleges, high rents for houses, cost of food grains shooting up, increasing expenses on medicines they have to buy because generally hospitals do not have the medicines prescribed by the doctors, clothes and foot-wear getting more and more expensive, and increasing taxation. The average Middle Class person today is therefore finding it increasingly difficult to maintain a reasonably decent standard of domestic life. Many get into debts. A special committee of senior retired civil servants and a small number of some influential local persons might be set up to study this problem and make recommendations for the betterment of this class of people whose interests are not receiving adequate attention and consideration of the ruling party.

### 18. Communism

Communism, allied with its totalitarian ideology is not indigenous to India. It is foreign to our own philosophy and to our own ideology of enjoying freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the freedom as a people of a democracy to set up a government of our own choice or to remove it if we wished to. I respect Communism and Communists, but only in the place of their birth and NOT in my country. I beg my Indian brothers and sisters who have chosen to throw their loyalty across the frontiers of our Motherland to Communism and its ideologies of totalitarianism, to please give up being Communists and be true to the glorious heritage of our culture and philosophy and become loyal 'INDIANISTS' and give their best and participate in all the Nation-building projects in a truly democratic way. We have only recently removed the heavy yoke of foreign rule. We are a free people. Our soil and our air are both free. Let us please keep them free for ever with our heads and chins up as INDIANS and not invite another yoke over our necks—the Communist yoke, which please God will never come. Should it come, the thousands of years of the glories of our culture and civilisation will become merely 'tales of old' and we and generations to follow will become mere 'mechanised robots'. Our 'Souls' and our 'homes' will be replaced by mere materialistic and regimented 'minds' and 'houses'. This must not be allowed to happen in our Sacred land.

The crime of some of the Indians who are communists and who are so devotedly backing up China, which has aggressed us unprovoked, bringing in its wake endless hardship and economic suffering to our millions is to my mind a worse crime than the crime of some Muslims enjoying the liberties of Indian Citizenship being primarily loyal to Pakistan. Virtually, therefore, such Indian Communists are enemies of India, and this must be put right by our Government. Such traitors should be made to find their homes outside our Motherland, and soon.

We can learn a lot also from Communist countries particularly from Russia in matters of scientific advance, industrial progress and so on, and let us learn them. I would like India to be on the friendliest terms with them, particularly with Russia, reciprocally, but definitely NOT at the expense of bartering our liberties and freedom as a democracy, or mortgaging our future, as an Independent Nation.

We can give our millions equal opportunities in life, economic prosperity and other basic necessities, to give them a life of self respect and dignity, on our own. We do not want Communism to teach us our duty to our people. I beg the Communists outside our country, actively interesting themselves in our internal affairs, to please leave us alone to work out ourselves our salvation from our internal ills but we will always be grateful to them for any help they can give us when we ourselves ask them for such help, as is now being given so well, by Russia and as we do get from many non-Communist countries like the U. S. A., England, Japan, Germany and so on who have been very generous and liberal in giving the help we ASK for.

## 19. INDUSTRIALISATION

India must be industrially self-sufficient as far as possible but we must have a sense of proportion in our planning for Heavy Industries and Small Industries. 'Step up Cottage Industry' should be the real cry of the day. We have not the financial and/or the raw material resources in adequate scales to meet the heavy demands of heavy industries. Steel is necessary in a big way but will take time to have all that we want. Heavy industry is of course necessary but small industry should receive prior attention to provide to our rural millions—their urgent needs of 'pots and pans and ploughs' because our future prosperity entirely depends on the rural development in a big way. We must cut our coat according to the cloth we have and we should not have ambitious plans to 'catch up' with other highly industrialised countries in a desperate hurry. Haste is waste. We will of

course catch up in time. We are only Seventeen Years old as a free people and yet we have advanced quite a bit in this respect.

In order to step up industrialisation—whilst some major key industries must be Nationalised—the bulk of the projects of industries—must be in the Private Sector. Unless the Private Sector is kept up—there can be no competition for improvement in all our projects and without competitions there can be no good progress. Wholesale nationalisation is Communistic, and we are NOT a Communist country and pray God we never shall be.

We want to produce more in our factories, but strikes and 'go slow' games, organised by some labour unions do not help this. It would be a very good thing if workers in all factories are given a percentage of shares in them—so as to create an incentive to work, by making them feel that they are also shareholders for profits made—but they must also be prepared to share the 'losses' too, should there be any.

We want 'Technicians' at all levels in thousands. We have excellent material for training. In my travels round the country, I have seen in our many factories our men turning out superb work. I am proud of them. We will catch up with the rest of the world, but we must give incentives to our youth. Our good technicians must be paid well. If good Doctors and good Lawyers and Cinema Stars can pile up wealth why should not our good technicians have a little more money too. Scientific, Industrial and Agricultural Research must go on ceaselessly and there should be no stinting of money for this. Highest rewards and not niggardly rewards of a few hundred rupees, must be given for discoveries of new inventions which will be for the good of the masses. This will be an incentive.

## 20. Millions of Valuable Man-Hours Lost

Millions of valuable man-hours in our factories, and farms and fields, in all our education institutes and offices are being lost to our country by our having far too many holidays, by the post-independence fashion of eleven o'clock Tea/

Coffee breaks, by people being more less bidden to appear in public in large numbers to welcome VIPs, by our having 'holidays' when some 'VIP' dies, by subordinates and posses of police having to hang around Ministers and similar persons holding high offices, where ever they go and so on. This is a criminal waste of time when every second of the day is needed for Nation building work in every walk of life. This has got to be put right soon.

Incidentally, I wish the use of the letters VIP be done away with in peace time. They are used only in war time for security reasons and this is correct and essential, but definitely not in peace time.

The need to have so many 'Public holidays' must be looked into again and the present numbers cut down. As for 'holidays' when high dignitaries die—I think the word 'holidays' is quite inappropriate. 'Holiday' implies time off for enjoyment and relaxing and surely no one wishes to enjoy and relax on a day of mourning. Only the following need be done on such days to honour the dead dignitary :

- a) Immediate public announcement of the death.
- b) Cancellation of all public and festive functions on the day.
- c) All flags to fly at half mast.
- d) Work in all public offices, public institutions of any kind, educational institutions, public and private, stop for say one hour, at time to be fixed by their respective heads, when all those working there would be collected at some central place where the head would give a short 'obituary oration' about the person who has died and then ask them to observe say half a minute's silence praying to God to keep the departed soul in peace for ever and then get back to work with a resolve to work more determinedly and more vigorously to produce more for the country.

NOTE: If the day happens to be already a 'holiday' this ceremony should be gone through on the very next working day.

- e) Restaurants and shops may close voluntarily, say for one hour and no more.
- f) At the place where the person dies, those public servants and students residing in that place should be given leave to go and pay homage to the dead and to accompany the funeral procession.
- g) Prayers to be offered at appropriate places of worship.

All public mourning should be spontaneous and NOT by order. This is all that need be done. The present practice of ordering 'paid public holidays' throughout, is in my mind not right or proper, for, the millions of man-hours lost in factories etc. cost the country crores of rupees and we certainly cannot afford this. Wages are ordered to be paid to labourers for no work done because some dignitary had died. Economically and morally this is not justified.

Seventeen years after Independence, the public being expected to go to air-ports railway stations, line the streets, put up 'welcome arches' and so on to welcome our own dignitaries who visit towns, cities and place in the normal course of their routine duties and many officials having to follow them in fleets of cars, Jeeps, Motor cycles and so on to their place of residence, is all meaningless and is quite unnecessary. This tamasha is repeated when such dignitaries depart after their visits. All these cost money and valuable time when every paisa and every second are needed for our Five Year Plans.

## 21. Family Planning

This is a matter which must receive Nation-wide attention. The enormous growth of population increasing by some 7 to 8 millions a year with inadequate food supply, the matters gets more and more serious every year. Unless this rapid growth of population is controlled speedily, we will have millions of hungry mouths and empty stomachs in our country and this will not help us have a virile nation of strong healthy people.

So until India grows enough food for her people, with something to spare, I think those whose monthly earnings are

less than Rs. 300/-, particularly the labour Class, should not have more than three children. Contraceptives may be all right for the illiterates, the only way is 'operation' (vasectomy). This should be a top priority obligation for the Union and State Governments. There should be widespread education of the masses carried out vigorously and ceaselessly through the screen and by personal talks. Seminars and conferences with elaborate reports and statistics alone will not help. Action is needed. The masses must be made to realise that with limited financial means they can bring up their children properly if they have only two or three of these and no more. Let us tell them that with good education and physical fitness their children will have good opportunities to get up to the top-most rung of the ladder of life.

## 22. Food

India is short of food. Her population of some 500 millions is increasing by 7 to 8 millions a year. These additional mouths want food. There is no corresponding increase in food production today. Land owners of old who owned large stretches of land where they grew large quantities of food now hold only tiny parts of their old lands the rest having been taken away and distributed amongst the 'landless' quite some of whom have no idea of farming, nor have the means, nor the technical know-how of applying modern methods to get the best out of the land.

Because of this, I believe there are quite some areas of once rich fertile land now lying fallow. We are therefore not getting the fullest dividends from our land. India has the resources to be self-sufficient in food if the large land owners are encouraged to step up food production by offering them suitable incentives such as honours and awards and by giving them a feeling of security. Small land owners must be given the maximum benefits of agricultural extension service machinery, by encouraging them with financial help and advice to farm on modern methods using good seeds and adequate fertilisers. The output of food grains per acre in India is far

far below than in countries advanced in agriculture. Monetary rewards for better production per acre would help. The land reform policy can wait until we grow the quantity of food we need.

I have always 'batted' on the side of the less fortunate ones, the landless trying to do my best to help find a way to give them better living with their own land, cultivated either singly or voluntarily, NOT by order, in co-operation with their neighbours. There is enough land in India waiting to be opened up for cultivation. I would urge that such land be opened up in a big way with irrigation facilities provided, simple hutments put up and allotted to the landless in economic holdings. Such land could be sold on long term payments in reasonable instalments. On such holdings there could be co-operative farming if the owners wished to do it voluntarily.

If this is done and if there is an intensive drive to teach the farmer modern method of farming, our food production can be stepped up considerably to save us the humiliation to continue going a-begging for food from foreign countries and so saving considerable amount of foreign exchange.

Food production should receive number one priority in our Fourth Five Year Plan. It should be put on a 'war basis' every one going flat out to grow food everywhere. It can be done if there is intensive drive from the top to encourage farmers to produce more and more per acre. Hungry mouths and empty stomachs will not help build up high morale in any people and without high national morale we cannot have the unity and so the strength we need for our country's security and progress. Shortage of food may lead to serious discontent and disorder amongst the masses. This can be avoided by growing more food on our soil. We want food, more and more of it. Soaring prices of food stuff with the millions of the poor having no money to buy their daily food food which will cause great internal unrest. Hoarders of 'food' to make money when millions are hungry must be punished most severely. Rats and Monkeys eat up quite a lot of

our food. These 'enemies' must be kept away, subordinating orthodoxy to reality.

Food is not only of cereals. Vegetables, fruits, poultry, pulses, fish, oils, nuts, dairy are all also items of food. This fact should be put over to our masses and facilities given to them to be actively interested in the production of these items of food. Everyone who owns even one square foot of spare land should grow some 'food' on it and this can be done if everyone of us has true love for our country and wants to see her self-sufficient in food.

Every farmer should be permitted to market what he grows privately, at 'reasonable prices. This will the help stop 'hoarding' and high prices.

### 23. Our Cattle-Wealth

We have, I believe, the largest-number of cattle in the world—over 280 millions (figure subject to correction). If all these are as good as those in countries advanced in cattle breeding we certainly have a gold mine in this cattle wealth. We talk of 'ban cow slaughter', 'protect the cattle' and such sentimental talks, but we do not really look after them well.

It is a common sight all over India from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, from Rajasthan to Nagaland, to see many underfed ill-cared for cattle, milch cows giving barely a cup of milk a day and many many useless old cattle eating up the inadequate fodder in our country, and so not enabling us to feed the good ones properly and adequately. There are no plans throughout India for properly prepared 'grazing grounds' for our cattle. With cities expanding, factories coming up every where, coffee and tea plantations and farms being opened up, whatever meagre grazing facilities were available in and around towns and cities no longer exist. So cattle in such places have no place for grazing, except in the private gardens of city dwellers !

If we are to build up our children with strong bones and muscles, they must get atleast half a pound of milk a day. Today, perhaps, the average consumption of milk per child in

India cannot be more than one ounce a day. So we have to have good milch cows and milch buffaloes in tens of thousands everywhere. We cannot have these if we do not feed them well, if there are thousands of useless old cattle kept going, eating up a large portion of our none too liberal supply of fodder. So what is the answer? I love animals, domestic and wild. I do not shoot wild animals. If I see any domestic animal suffering with sores, with flies on them or any animal in pain of any kind, I personally do, do something to soothe this suffering. There are many orthodox people who are tireless in expressing their only vocal kindness to our cattle by shouting 'ban cow slaughter', 'gho rakshana' and all that, but who would not go one inch out of their way to touch an injured cow or a bull or a calf lying helplessly anywhere, covered with flies. There are those too, who do not feed or house their cattle properly or those who squeeze out every drop of milk from a cow's udder leaving nothing for the poor calf to have. This crime of such people is far worse and more sinful than 'cow slaughter'. I have always been and still am actively interested, in the work of the 'Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals'. What is to be done to put this right?

Here is my answer :

(a) There should be everywhere in India, grazing land developed and run by the agricultural departments—specially set aside for this purpose to provide fodder for cattle. Naturally people using them will have to pay some fixed monthly fees per head of cattle grazing there. Where, for want of rain and water, green fodder cannot be grown, the Government should encourage 'Private Enterprise' to make and supply large quantities of 'powdered grass' or of such other green fodder from places where they grow in abundance. During monsoon months green grass grows everywhere in great quantities and this could be used for making 'powdered grass'.

(b) Cattle which are old and are certified by a panel of at least two veterinary officers and some local person of

authority as having passed the stage of usefulness of any kind, must be painlessly destroyed.

(c) Artificial insemination must be encouraged in a big controlled way throughout India.

(d) Cattle breeding should be encouraged. Incentives of high money rewards or of grants of land must be offered for governmentally accepted good results. Wherever deserving, Government subsidies must be given.

(e) I believe there is a great demand from some foreign countries for cattle for which we in India have no more use. Let us export such cattle to countries where they would be better fed and put into useful purposes.

This is the answer, as I see it.

#### 24. Prohibition

We are NOT a nation of drunkards. I have always been and still am strongly against unrestrained consumption of alcohol or the youth making a habit of taking drinks, but there are many adults who do like their odd 'tot' of this alcohol or that. They have been taking it for years either as a Pick-me-up or as a medicine or as in the case of toddy, as a 'liquid meal'. This is a habit with them ; why should they be deprived of this pleasure ? Some can afford this and some cannot. The labour class in particular cannot all afford it. I know it is mainly for the good of the labour class this 'prohibition act' is on—but No reform by order can ever produce the results desired. Only patient and friendly persuasion and intensive education can produce the real answer. Prohibition by order is harming our country in many ways. Here are some :

(a) Loss of crores of Rupees revenue from excise and possibly spending crores in implementing this policy, which has not been successful.

(b) Driving the people, who normally are not addicts to alcohol to take to drinking out of sheer cussedness and then drinking some 'poisonous' alcoholic beverage illicitly brewed and distilled, paying for them fantastic prices thus ruining

their health and wasting money. Many have lost their eye sight by drinking petrol, spirits, and so on.

(c) Teaching people to tell lies, deceive the eyes of law by adopting low cunning methods to hide their drinking and illicit distilling 'crimes' thus besmirching our national morals and character.

(d) The people beginning to have no respect for law.

I believe quite a few parts of India now 'dry' by order, have never before been known to be 'wetter'. Let us not please deceive ourselves by claiming that 'prohibition' has been a success. It certainly has NOT.

What is the answer? Let us scrap 'prohibition' and initiate a well-planned 'stop drinking campaign' amongst our masses, particularly the labour class, in a persuasive spirit and help them to give up drinking voluntarily. Let us have country wide 'Temperance' drive, by education, using films, songs, dramas and so on. This method and only this is the most effective way of achieving this reform and no other.

## 25. Town Planning

It is distressing to see urbanisation going on feverishly throughout India with progressively less enthusiasm shown by our people in expanding and building up rural life. With the advance in industrialisation, with the increasing facilities provided for entertainments, easy living and so on in our cities, I am afraid we will have to accept the growing rush for houses in cities.

Until the pendulum swings in favour of ruralisation at some future date, and I do sincerely hope it will soon, we will have to have well thought-out plans for expanding our towns and cities. There are 'Town Planning Departments' in practically all the States. We read of 'Town Planners Seminars/Conferences'—'Town Developing Organisations' and so on, but I do not see much visible evidence of the various paper projects discussed and planned by these authorities being implemented in so far as the man-in-the-street is concerned. There are still far too many slums all over

India because of the apparent uncontrolled growth and expansion of our cities and towns. One sees in our big cities far too many pavement dwellers of the unemployed class, with large families, children sprawling about in mud and muck and the unfortunate parents doing their humble best to eke out a living for them all. All these are heart-rending sights to see in our country today. There seems to be a serious falling off in the standard of tidiness and cleanliness in our cities. Badly kept hedges, dead tress, stray cattle wandering about in the streets, totally inadequate public latrines, are all too common a sight in many cities.

I would like to see some of the 'urban facilities' being made available in rural areas too. When we have 'Town Planners' why should there be no 'Village Planners' too? Let us have them. Villagers also like cinemas, eating houses and shops. We have got to popularize 'Rural Living'-in every way-for in this Rural India lies the real future progress of our Mother-land.

The Town Planners must not have too ambitious schemes. The growth of towns should be controlled by fixing the maximum number of people for whom living facilities etc. can be provided. The availability of water, conservancy facilities and electric power could be the main deciding factors in fixing the maximum numbers. Haphazard construction of buildings all over must be forbidden. Tidiness, cleanliness, well-kept gardens and hedges, removal of dead trees, provision of adequate public latrines, in all towns and cities must be insisted upon.

Should there be more people in excess of the fixed maximum needing housing facilities, etc., satellite townships should be put up within reasonable distances of each other. Each should be self-contained in so far as shopping, schooling, postal, hospitals, water supply, conservancy, electric power supply, and transport facilities are concerned.

Slums should be cleared on a white-hot priority throughout India. Blocks of simple neat hutments properly laid out with roads, lighting, conservancy and water facilities should

be provided for the slum dwellers. There are today far too many palatial buildings, luxuriously fitted up, coming up every where for public and private offices, houses for legislators, Ministers and high officials, all of whom must make do with simple and economical accommodation until the millions of homeless ones have roofs to sleep under.

## 26. The Commonwealth of Nations

Thanks to the great foresightedness of our late Prime Minister Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, we after becoming a Sovereign Democratic Republic on the 26th January, 1950, continued to remain in the Commonwealth of Nations. We are in it not to see what we can get out of it—but to see what we can contribute to its work—to keep its various members bound together by a common bond of friendship to help each other in the development of economic, industrial and similar matters of common interest.

The attractive feature of this splendid set-up is that its members are not subordinate to any dictates from WHITEHALL nor are they obliged to say 'yes' to everything other Members may say. It is an organisation where there is always free and frank exchange of ideas—similar on occasions very conflicting on others ; but all done in an atmosphere of good brotherly feeling of a family life. It is an organisation where the members in good spirit agree to dis-agree—where there is no breathing of 'fire'—but where there is always a genuine effort to breathe 'Oil'—to pour 'oil' over any 'troubled waters'. Countries once British Colonies and now Independent are NOT subjects of the British Crown. The British Monarch is today affectionately voluntarily accepted by these new Independent countries only as a symbolic Head of this 'Family of Nations' in the Commonwealth. England once a 'very dominating member of this family is now just one of the family, wishing well for the progress of the other Members and ready to give freedom to the few remaining British Colonies when they (the colonies) say they are economically and politically matured to become free. I call

on our youth who will be controlling the destinies of India of tomorrow—not to get carried away by the mad cry of some who keep saying 'we must quit the Commonwealth' for no real convincing reason other than some personal hatred for our past rulers by some short-sighted individuals. This is not culture. Remember, India is not ruled by England or by anybody by her being in the Commonwealth. There is nothing to gain by leaving the Commonwealth nor is India losing any of her sovereign rights in any shape or form by remaining in it. I earnestly hope this Membership, a great legacy left by our revered Panditji, will remain undisturbed for ever. This remaining is NOT alignment. The 'Mechanics' of running this family may change but the principle of the Commonwealth must remain for ever.

## 27. Our Achievements so Far

In the balance-sheet of our achievements since independence we have many entries on the debit side but we certainly have a good many on the credit side too. We have the following on the credit side, increased educational facilities, particularly great advances in the education of women, improved roads, better rail and air communications, advanced medical service, longevity of life raised from about 28 to nearly 40 years, reduction in infant mortality, scientific and industrial progress, with particular reference to manufacture and assembling of motor vehicles of many types, —motor cycles—scooters—bicycles—locomotives—agricultural—machinery—telephones—radios and so on, village uplift with the birth of Panchayat Rule, stepping up our co-operative societies which are doing good work. Small savings habit slowly coming in amongst the lower class of people. A modicum of prosperity amongst the working class and the man-in-the-street, as evidenced in the large numbers of them seen travelling in buses and trains. Eating places and cinemas are never empty. People are much better clad and clothed generally. All these have cost the country crores of rupees—crores borrowed and crores raised by increased taxation—but

still we have done something. Our per capita income has definitely improved, though not appreciably. It will of course improve further, but only with hard work. It is joy to go to any grocery stores to find practically everything sold there—made in India. Our textile Industry is about the best in the world.

I know we have many entries on the debit side, but as a young country this is to be expected up to a point, but not to the extent it is. After all, we took over a going concern of good administration, communications, police, judiciary and army and so we had a flying start. Some of the authorities concerned have not done their job honestly and efficiently in the interests of the people. One of the most distressing entries on the debit side is our complete failure to build up a strong healthy Opposition to the Ruling Party in all parliaments. But for this dismal failure on the part of the people, there would have been more entries on the credit side and much less on the debit side. Let us wake up now to make up for this 'failure' and soon.

We have made mistakes, and probably will make more but we must learn from the mistakes made. Crores have been spent as has been said by some of our top leaders on some unproductive projects as a result of ill-conceived plans inefficiently executed by dishonest agents. Let us proceed with our planning patiently and not have too many ambitious schemes on our plate, without the backing up of money. We must have more schools and more hospitals. We are putting up more buildings for them, but let the planners please ensure that schools will have teachers, and hospitals will have doctors, in the numbers required and not mere buildings remaining empty as it is reported to be the case in many parts of India today.

In this respect whilst public opinion has a right to be critical of mismanagement by the Government, I do think it is not proper on our part to keep criticising the Government for all the ills the country has, and expect miracle to be performed by it without our being honest in the transactions

of our daily life. Faked accounts to avoid payment of taxes legitimately owing to the State, hoarding of goods and food stuff to sell at sky high blackmarket prices to the poor, dishonesty in the execution of contracts, and piling up wealth seem to be common practice with some of us. We must co-operate with the Government in implementing their plans and policies accepted by us as being good for the nation.

We as a people have to be honest ourselves in our service to our country, then and only then, can we point our fingers at others accusing them of being dishonest and inefficient.

I am afraid our foreign relationship is not all that good we have imagined it is. I only go by results. Do we really command the same respect from friendly Asian and African countries we did a few years ago? Indian Nationals who had been living for generations in some foreign Asian countries are today being forced to return to India. This may catch on with countries in other continents too. Have we the full understanding and appreciation of our problems by some of the great Western Powers from whom we have been and are receiving very liberal and generous financial and other aids? Have they full faith in our National policies to want to willingly continue to help us? We do not want any one's sympathy—we want their understanding. Let us take more active interest in domestic internal affairs. Let us put our own 'Home' right first.

We do not want other countries to tell us today, that they approve or disapprove of our new Government's policies in our affairs. We must decide for ourselves our policies and other countries have no business to advise us on how to shape them. We have many, many able people of our own to shape our destinies by ourselves. On the other hand let us not tell other sovereign countries how they should deal with their Colonies etc.—unless we are asked for our opinions and suggestions.

We talk of 'effecting economy' in our daily life, but what have we really done so far in practice. I see more and more

luxurious parties, food being wasted at them, costly political annual conferences and celebrations, palatial buildings for offices etc. as I have said earlier. Can we not rely on the Heads of our Diplomatic Missions abroad to do the work our Ministers and official delegations who frequently visit foreign countries at great expense to the State now go out to do. There is a great waste of money on electric power for lights, fans and air conditioners, expensive furniture, carpets etc. in offices. A great deal of economy can be effected if there is less use of stationery, controlled use of public motor vehicles, and by cutting down unnecessary illuminations one sees all over India. All this may sound too elementary and the savings only drops in the ocean—but drops make the ocean ! To us every 'drop' counts.

## 28. Now What of the Future

The present Government at the Centre headed by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri holds out great promises for putting right the many 'anxieties' of the nation today. Our Prime Minister, calm, quiet, unassuming, but a man with a strong will and his Cabinet have many difficult and important tasks to tackle. A not too efficient administration, soaring prices of food grains, increasing taxes causing serious discontent amongst the people, youth indiscipline, employers being compelled against their interests to give more and more to the employees who are not giving their best for more production in the factories and farms—are all problems which will keep this new team on the go all the time. Added to these are the anti-Hindi agitation, National disunity caused by the creation of linguistic States, Communalism, the threat of subtle communist infiltration into the ruling party, the reported sad cleavage in the Congress Party, the external threat from China to our security, respect for law from the public being on the decline and above all a rapidly increasing population by some 7 to 8 millions a year, creating many social and economic problems particularly on the food front, the production of which today is not satisfactory. Our foreign policy has to

be re-cast, to fit in with the rapidly changing patterns of 'international pulse' to get more real good friends whilst being determined not to deviate one inch from our loyalty to our Constitution in which we have enshrined our firm resolve to keep India a 'Sovereign Democratic Republic'. Our publicity policy in foreign countries and its efficient implementation have got to be smartened up. It is generally felt that it is neither adequate nor efficient enough today. The ever increasing number of Indians being forced to leave some foreign countries where they had lived for generations—is yet another serious matter for our Prime Minister to deal with. Calm and persuasive diplomatic approach to Governments of countries forcing such Indian Nationals to quit their Countries —to stop doing so, wil I am sure, be made by our Prime Minister.

Another task a most important one, as I have said earlier on wiil be to usher in a new era of India-Pakistan amity as good friendly neighbours bringing happiness, prosperity and strength to our countries, individually and jointly. I have great faith in our Prme Minister in regard to this, to bring in this new era.

Should the Chinese and/or any other threats to our security become real, we must be prepared to ask for and accept physical military aid from countries who are our genuine well-wishers, particularly from Commonwealth countries. Our leaders have been of late, warning the Nation of possible resumption of hostilities by China. As our Defence Minister has said our Army and Air force are being rapidly expanded, but we cannot at the moment meet any new aggression which certainly may be on a very big scale, on our own resources

I for one feel that the Government of today led by Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri will be capable of dealing with all the problems efficiently but the Leader must be served well loyally and selflessly by his colleagues and by the members of his party. I do hope he will be ruthless in dealing firmly speedily with disloyal and inefficient elements in his party. I do hope too there will never be any 'condonation of crimes'

or 'rewards for inefficiency'. I am sure he will not allow personal feelings of old friendship to influence his decisions. Big problems are piling up. It is not fair to expect our Prime Minister to carry this heavy load himself—by his having to deal with all these numerous problems himself. I know there is his team of specially selected capable Ministers to help him, but I do feel very strongly that his colleagues should insist that he should have a second in command—a Deputy Prime Minister, to relieve him of some of his heavy burden.

Every one in authority should go in search of opportunities to serve the country and the people and not in search of 'privileged positions of power' to make money.

I hope before long our Prime Minister will have a thoroughly cleaned up firm Government machinery with a high standard of administrative efficiency. This will ensure of the common man being convinced of his welfare and interests being well looked after with social justice guaranteed. The authorities concerned should show in their daily service that they exist for the common man and not vice-versa. The aim of the Government should be to remove speedily the present state of wholesale discontentment and lack of trust in the authorities concerned that prevails through-out the country. I urge the 'talkers' of Army Rule not to talk so, for I cannot see this happening in our country, because the Officers and Men of our defence Services have an unmatched sense of loyalty to the Government of the country and none of them would ever even dream of laying on an 'Army Coup, as such thoughts are alien and repugnant to their sense of duty to the Government.

We must cease charging our simple millions as being 'disintegrated'. There is nothing wrong with our people—where there is no dis-integration—but there certainly is disintegration at the top levels of leaders of various political parties, and these MUST 'integrate' first—and then all will be well.

We must give the present Government sufficient time to find its feet and produce the results expected of it, but the people must co-operate as loyal citizens of the country in all

Nation-building plans and projects. Political cohesion and National unity are absolutely essential for National security. Let us have faith in our capacity to build the India of our dreams. We can do it and we will do it if we remained loyal to our soil as INDIANS at all times.

Let us wake up—and be men of Courage and Conviction and speak out our minds freely, frankly and fearlessly as loyal citizens of India, to gain National Strength to keep our Motherland democratic in its fullest sense and become the envy of the world—for her peace, plenty and prosperity. Strength for peace.



